



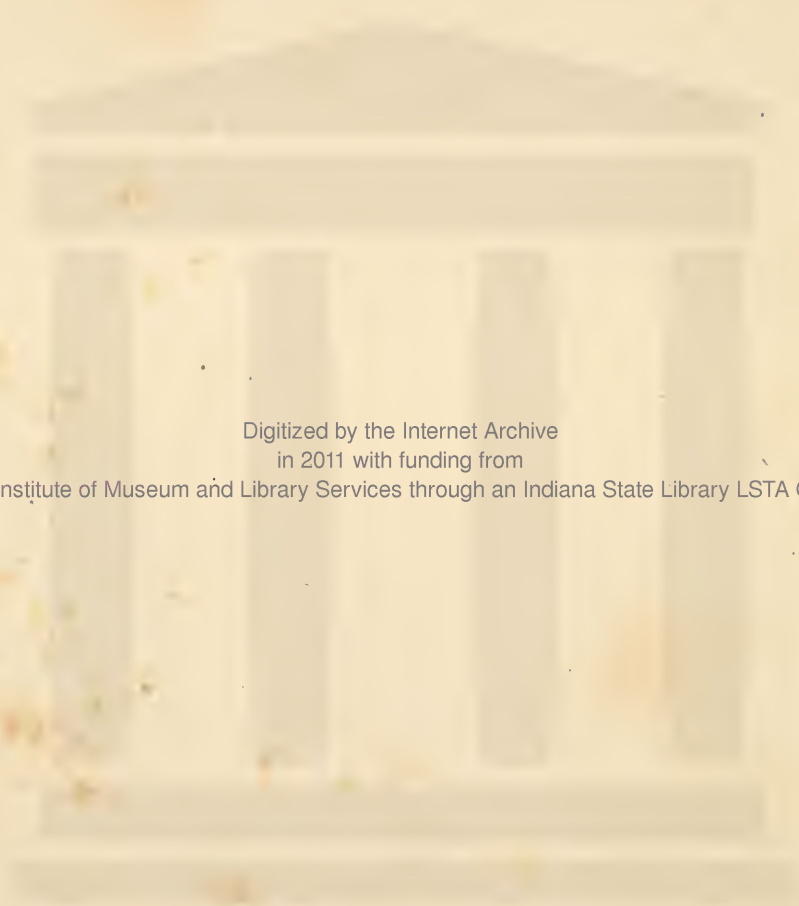


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# LIVES OF THE PRESIDENTS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

FROM WASHINGTON TO THE PRESENT TIME.

CONTAINING

A NARRATIVE OF THE MOST INTERESTING EVENTS IN THE  
CAREER OF EACH PRESIDENT; THUS CONSTITUTING  
A GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT,

AUTHOR OF THE "MOTHER AT HOME," "LIFE OF NAPOLEON," "HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR IN  
AMERICA," "FRENCH REVOLUTION," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS OF ALL  
THE PRESIDENTS ENGRAVED ON STEEL, PICTURES  
OF THEIR PRIVATE RESIDENCES, AND FIFTEEN OTHER WOOD  
ENGRAVINGS OF THE MOST INTERESTING SCENES IN THEIR LIVES.

SOLD ONLY BY DISTRIBUTING AGENTS.

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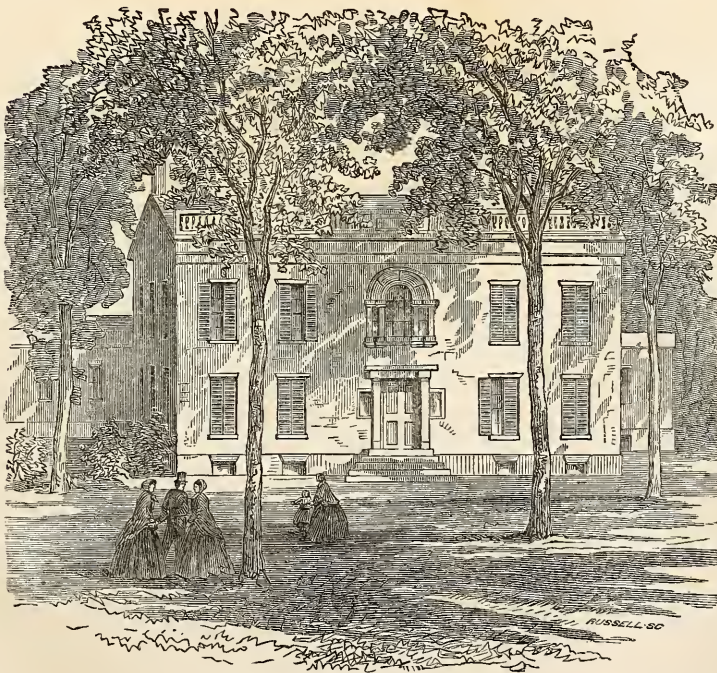


## CHAPTER VIII.

### MARTIN VAN BUREN.

Birth and Childhood. — Studies Law. — Talents and Industry. — Political Principles. — Success as a Lawyer and Politician. — Aids in the Election of Jackson. — Secretary of State. — Mrs. Eaton. — Resigns his Secretaryship. — Minister to England. — Rejected by the Senate. — Attains the Vice-Presidency. — Patronage of Gen. Jackson. — Chosen President. — Retirement and Declining Years.

THERE is but little in the life of Martin Van Buren of romantic interest. He fought no battles, engaged in no wild adventures.



RESIDENCE OF MARTIN VAN BUREN.

Though his life was stormy in political and intellectual conflicts, and he gained many signal victories, his days passed uneventful in those incidents which give zest to biography. His ancestors,

as his name indicates, were of Dutch origin, and were among the earliest emigrants from Holland to the banks of the Hudson. His father was a farmer, residing in the old town of Kinderhook. His mother, also of Dutch lineage, was a woman of superior intelligence and of exemplary piety. Martin, their eldest son, was born on the 5th of December, 1782.

He was decidedly a precocious boy, developing unusual activity, vigor, and strength of mind. At the age of fourteen, he had finished his academic studies in his native village, and commenced the study of the law. As he had not a collegiate education, seven years of study in a law-office were required of him before he could be admitted to the bar. Inspired with a lofty ambition, and conscious of his powers, he pursued his studies with indefatigable industry. After spending six years in an office in his native village, he went to the city of New York, and prosecuted his studies for the seventh year under the tuition of William P. Van Ness, who subsequently obtained celebrity as the second of Burr, in his duel with Hamilton.

Martin Van Buren's father was a tavern-keeper, as well as a farmer; a man of imperturbable good nature, and a very decided Democrat. His son inherited from him both his *bonhomie* and his political principles. It is said of the son, that, all through life, he was ever ready to greet his most bitter opponent with an open hand and a friendly smile. Burr was in the most brilliant period of his career when the young law-student first made his acquaintance. There was a certain congeniality of spirit between them which promoted friendship. Martin, then a young man of twenty, was very handsome, and was endowed with shining abilities; and one can apparently see in his after-life the influence which the seductive and commanding mind of Burr exerted upon his youthful nature. In one respect, indeed, they were different: Mr. Van Buren was ever a man of irreproachable morality.

In 1803, Mr. Van Buren, then twenty-one years of age, commenced the practice of law in his native village. The great conflict between the Federal and Republican party was then at its height. It has often been necessary in the previous sketches to allude to the principles which separated the two parties. Washington and John Adams considered our great danger to consist in not giving the *Central* Government sufficient power: the Democratic party, on the contrary, under the leadership of Jefferson,



thought that our danger consisted in not giving the *State* governments sufficient power.

In August, 1786, George Washington wrote to Jay, "We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederacy. I do not conceive that we can long exist as a nation, without having centralized somewhere a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States."

Mr. Van Buren was, from the beginning, a politician. He had, perhaps, imbibed that spirit while listening to the many discussions which had been carried on in his father's bar-room. He was in cordial sympathy with Jefferson, and earnestly and eloquently espoused the cause of State Rights; though, at that time, the Federal party held the supremacy both in his town and state. Though ever taking an active part in politics, he devoted himself with great assiduity to the duties of a village lawyer, and rose rapidly in his profession.

His success and increasing reputation led him, after six years of practice, to remove to Hudson, the shire-town of his county. Here he spent seven years, constantly gaining strength by contending in the courts with some of the ablest men who have adorned the bar of his State. The heroic example of John Quincy Adams, in retaining in office every faithful man, without regard to his political preferences, had been thoroughly repudiated under the administration of Gen. Jackson. The unfortunate principle was now fully established, that "to the victors belong the spoils." Still this principle, to which Mr. Van Buren gave his adherence, was not devoid of inconveniences. When, subsequently, he attained power which placed vast patronage in his hands, he was heard to say, —

"I prefer an office which has no patronage. When I give a man an office, I offend his disappointed competitors and their friends. Nor am I certain of gaining a friend in the man I appoint; for, in all probability, he expected something better."

Just before leaving Kinderhook for Hudson, Mr. Van Buren married a lady alike distinguished for beauty and accomplishments. After twelve short years, she sank into the grave, the victim of consumption, leaving her husband and four sons to weep over her loss. For twenty-five years, Mr. Van Buren was an earnest, successful, assiduous lawyer. The record of those years

is barren in items of public interest. The political affairs of the State of New York, with which he was constantly intermingled, were in an entangled condition which no mortal would now undertake to unravel. In 1812, when thirty years of age, he was chosen to the State Senate, and gave his strenuous support to Mr. Madison's administration. In 1815, he was appointed Attorney-General; and, the next year, moved to Albany, the capital of the State. Here he cordially supported the administration of Mr. Madison; and yet he voted for Clinton, in opposition to Madison, at his second election. Soon after this, we again find him the unrelenting opponent of Clinton.

While he was acknowledged as one of the most prominent leaders of the Democratic party, he had the moral courage to avow that true democracy did not require that "universal suffrage" which admits the vile, the degraded, the ignorant, to the right of governing the State. In true consistency with his democratic principles, he contended, that, while the path leading to the privilege of voting should be open to every man without distinction, no one should be invested with that sacred prerogative, unless he were in some degree qualified for it by intelligence, virtue, and some property-interest in the welfare of the State. He contended that "universal suffrage" with the motley mass who crowd the garrets and cellars of New York would render the elections a curse rather than a blessing, and would drive all respectable people from the polls.

Mr. Van Buren cannot, perhaps, be accused of inconsistency in his political life; and yet, in endeavoring to trace out his career amidst the mazes of party politics, one is reminded of the attempt to follow with the eye the mounted aide of a general amidst the smoke, tumult, and uproar of the field of battle, now moving in one direction, now in another, and yet ever in accordance with some well-established plan.

In 1818, there was a great split in the Democratic party in New York; and Mr. Van Buren took the lead in organizing that portion of the party called the "Albany Regency," which is said to have swayed the destinies of the State for a quarter of a century. In 1821, he was elected a member of the United-States Senate; and, in the same year, he took a seat in the convention to revise the constitution of his native State. His course in this convention secured the approval of men of all parties. No one could



doubt the singleness of his endeavors to promote the interests of all classes in the community. In the Senate of the United States, he rose at once to a conspicuous position as an active and useful legislator; acting always, however, in sympathy with the Republican, or Democratic party.

In 1827, John Quincy Adams being then in the presidential chair, Mr. Van Buren was re-elected to the Senate. He had been from the beginning a determined opposer of the Administration, adopting the "State-Rights" view in opposition to what was deemed the Federal proclivities of Mr. Adams. In his letter accepting the senatorship, in accordance with his character as a "strict constructionist," he said, —

"It shall be my constant and zealous endeavor to protect the remaining rights reserved to the States by the Federal Constitution, to restore those of which they have been divested by construction, and to promote the interest and honor of our common country."

Soon after this, in 1828, he was chosen Governor of the State of New York, and accordingly resigned his seat in the Senate. Probably no one in the United States contributed so much towards ejecting John Quincy Adams from the presidential chair, and placing in it Andrew Jackson, as did Martin Van Buren. Whether entitled to the reputation or not, he certainly was regarded throughout the United States as one of the most skilful, sagacious, and cunning of manœuvrers. It was supposed that no one knew so well as he how to touch the secret springs of action; how to pull all the wires to put his machinery in motion; and how to organize a political army which would, secretly and stealthily, accomplish the most gigantic results. By these powers, it is said that he outwitted Mr. Adams, Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, and secured results which few thought then could be accomplished. In the spring of 1827, Mr. Webster had no doubt that Mr. Adams's administration would be sustained. He wrote to Jeremiah Mason, —

"A survey of the whole ground leads me to believe confidently in Mr. Adams's re-election. I set down New England, New Jersey, the greater part of Maryland, and perhaps all Delaware, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, and Louisiana, for him. We must then get votes enough in New York to choose him, and, I think, cannot fail of this."

At the appointed hour, Mr. Van Buren opened his masked batteries. Mines were sprung all over the United States. The battle raged with fury which had scarcely ever been equalled. The names of Adams and Jackson rang out upon every breeze: each was represented as an angel, each a demon. There was not an aristocratic crime which John Quincy Adams had not committed, no democratic atrocity of which Andrew Jackson had not been guilty.

At length, the electoral votes were cast. Gen. Jackson received one hundred and seventy-eight; Mr. Adams, eighty-three. Gen. Jackson immediately offered the post of Secretary of State to Mr. Van Buren; a tribute, as he said, "to his acknowledged talents and public services, and in accordance with the wishes of the Republican party throughout the Union."

Scarcely had Gen. Jackson taken his seat in the presidential chair, ere there arose one of the most singular difficulties which ever distracted the government of a nation. There was a tavern-keeper in Washington who had a pretty, vivacious, free-and-easy daughter, by the name of Peg O'Neil. Peg may have been a very virtuous girl; but she was so intimate with all her father's guests, so unreserved in conversation and manners, and withal so fascinating, that her reputation was not unblemished. Gen. Jackson, when senator in 1823, had boarded with the old man, and had become acquainted with his pretty daughter. Miss O'Neil, however, eventually married a purser in the United-States navy, by the name of Timberlake. He was, of course, much of the time absent from home. Major John H. Eaton, a senator from Tennessee, took board at O'Neil's tavern, and became very much fascinated by the beautiful and witty Mrs. Timberlake. Report was busy with the fair fame of them both; and the lady, whether justly or unjustly, acquired a very unenviable reputation. Her husband one day, in a fit of melancholy, while in the Mediterranean, committed suicide; and Major Eaton immediately after married her. This event took place soon after Gen. Jackson's election to the presidency.

Major Eaton was a friend of Gen. Jackson, and was appointed by him Secretary of War. The ladies of the other members of the cabinet were in great trouble. How could they receive Peg O'Neil (now Mrs. Eaton), with her sullied reputation, into their social circles? They conferred together, and resolved that they

would not do it. Gen. Jackson, mindful of his own past troubles in that line, and assuming, with all the force of his impetuous nature, that Mrs. Eaton was a traduced and virtuous woman, resolved that she should be received as an honored member of the republican court. Several of the members of the cabinet were married, and these gentlemen sympathized with their wives. The cabinet was divided. The conflict roused all the tremendous energies of Gen. Jackson's soul.

Mr. Van Buren had neither wife nor daughter. He was one of the most pliant, politic, and courteous of men. It was one of the fundamental principles of his life, never to give offence, and never to appear to notice an injury. He was ever polite, alike to saint and sinner, to friend and enemy. Not unconscious of the gratification it would afford Gen. Jackson, he called upon Mrs. Eaton, made parties for her, and treated her with the most marked respect. His great abilities had already secured the confidence of the President, which this policy tended only to increase. Those familiar with the state of things at Washington soon perceived that Martin Van Buren had become a great power, and that he was on the high road to any degree of elevation he might desire.

The boundless popularity of Gen. Jackson rendered it probable that any one whom he might suggest as his successor would obtain the election. Not one year had elapsed after Gen. Jackson had assumed the reins of government, ere he avowed to his friends his intention to do every thing in his power to secure the presidency for Mr. Van Buren. About this time, the President was taken very sick. He therefore wrote a letter, carefully worded, to be published in case he should die, expressive of his wishes. In this letter, he says, —

“Permit me here to say of Mr. Van Buren, that I have found him every thing I could desire him to be, and believe him not only deserving my confidence, but the confidence of the nation. Instead of his being selfish and intriguing, as has been represented by his opponents, I have ever found him frank, open, candid, and manly. As a counsellor, he is able and prudent, republican in his principles, and one of the most pleasant men to do business with I ever saw. He is well qualified to fill the highest office in the gift of the people, who in him will find a true friend, and safe depository of their rights and liberty.”

For two years, this Mrs. Eaton conflict raged bitterly. Foreign

ministers and their wives were drawn into the troubled arena. Mr. Van Buren, however, succeeded in so governing his own actions, as to be ever increasing in strength. Daniel Webster wrote, early in the year 1831, —

“ Mr. Van Buren has evidently, at this moment, quite the lead in influence and importance. He controls all the pages on the back stairs, and flatters what seems at present the ‘ Aaron’s serpent ’ among the President’s desires, — a settled purpose of making out the lady, of whom so much has been said, a person of reputation. It is odd enough, but too evident to be doubted, that the consequence of this dispute in the social and fashionable world is producing great political effects, and may very probably determine who shall be successor to the present Chief Magistrate.”

In the division of the cabinet, there were, for Mrs. Eaton, Mr. Van Buren, Major Eaton, Mr. Barry, and the President; against her, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Branch, Mr. Berrien, and the Vice-President, Calhoun. This latter personage now hated Van Buren with perfect hatred. The President so loved him, that he was accustomed to address him with endearing epithets; speaking of him to others as Van, and calling him, to his face, Matty. At length, the President resolved to introduce harmony into his cabinet by the unprecedented measure of dismissing them all, and organizing the cabinet anew. This was to be accomplished by having those who were in sympathy with him resign, and receive rich offices elsewhere. If the others took the hint, and resigned also, well and good; if not, they were to be dismissed. Mr. Van Buren sent in his resignation, and immediately was appointed minister to the court of St. James.

All this redounded to the reputation of Mr. Van Buren; and more and more he was regarded as the great magician, whose wand possessed almost supernatural power. Upon returning to New York, he met with a triumphant reception, and, early in the autumn of 1831, sailed for London. Soon after his arrival there, Congress again met. It was necessary that the Senate should ratify his appointment. Messrs. Calhoun, Clay, and Webster appeared prominently as his opponents, accusing him of such a spirit of narrow partisanship as to unfit him to be the representative of our whole country. He was accused of being the originator of the system of removing from office every incumbent, however able and faithful, who did not advocate the principles of the



party in power. It was during the discussion upon this question that Gov. Marcy of New York, in defending the system of party removals, uttered the memorable words,—

“It may be, sir, that the politicians of New York are not so fastidious as some gentlemen are as to disclosing the principles on which they act. They boldly preach what they practise. When they are contending for victory, they avow their intention of enjoying the fruits of it. If they are defeated, they expect to retire from office; if they are successful, they claim, as a matter of right, the advantages of success. They see nothing wrong in the rule, that to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy.”

In this hour, when Mr. Van Buren was so bitterly assailed, Gov. Forsyth of Georgia paid the following beautiful tribute to his character:—

“Long known to me as a politician and a man; acting together in the hour of political adversity, when we had lost all but our honor; a witness of his movements when elevated to power, and in possession of the confidence of the Chief Magistrate and of the great majority of the people,—I have never witnessed aught in Mr. Van Buren which requires concealment, palliation, or coloring; never any thing to lessen his character as a patriot or a man; nothing which he might not desire to see exposed to the scrutiny of every member of this body, with the calm confidence of unsullied integrity. He is called an artful man, a giant of artifice, a wily magician. Those ignorant of his unrivalled knowledge of human character, his power of penetrating into the designs and defeating the purposes of his adversaries, seeing his rapid advance to power and public confidence, impute to *art* what is the natural result of those simple causes. Extraordinary talent; untiring industry; incessant vigilance; the happiest temper, which success cannot corrupt, nor disappointment sour,—these are the sources of his unexampled success, the magic arts, the artifices of intrigue, to which only he has resorted in his eventful life. Those who envy his success may learn wisdom from his example.”

Mr. Van Buren's rejection by the Senate must have been to him a great mortification. When the news reached London, it was proclaimed in all the journals of the city. That evening, Prince Talleyrand, the French minister, gave a party. Mr. Van Buren was present, as calm, social, and smiling as if floating on the full tide of prosperity. He returned to America, apparently

untroubled; was nominated for Vice-President, in the place of Calhoun, at the re-election of President Jackson; and with smiles for all, and frowns for none, went to take his place at the head of that Senate which had refused to confirm his nomination as ambassador.

Mr. Calhoun supposed that Mr. Van Buren's rejection by the Senate would prove his political death, and is reported to have said triumphantly, "It will kill him, sir, — kill him dead. He will never kick, sir, — never kick." This rejection roused all the zeal of President Jackson in behalf of his repudiated favorite; and this, probably more than any other cause, secured his elevation to the chair of the Chief Executive. On the 20th of May, 1836, Mr. Van Buren received the Democratic nomination to succeed Gen. Jackson as President of the United States. He was elected by a handsome majority, to the great delight of the retiring President. "Leaving New York out of the canvass," says Mr. Parton, "the election of Mr. Van Buren to the presidency was as much the act of Gen. Jackson as though the Constitution had conferred upon him the power to appoint a successor."

It was one of the most brilliant days of spring, when the long procession which accompanied Mr. Van Buren to his inauguration passed through Pennsylvania Avenue. A small volunteer corps escorted the President elect as he rode in a phaeton drawn by four grays. Gen. Jackson accompanied his friend, and both rode uncovered. As they alighted from the carriage at the foot of the steps, and ascended through the dense and moving mass, the tall head of the old chieftain, with his bristling hair, towered above all the rest, and attracted every eye. The day was calm, and the air elastic. Twenty thousand people were there assembled. As Mr. Van Buren delivered his inaugural address, his clear voice, in its distinct articulation, reached every ear.

The policy of the Government had been so distinctly marked out by Gen. Jackson, and Mr. Van Buren had so distinctly avowed his attention of following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor, that there was no call for the introduction of any new acts, or for any change in the administration.

Mr. Van Buren had scarcely taken his seat in the presidential chair, when a financial panic, almost unprecedented in its disastrous results, swept the land. Many attributed this to the war which Gen. Jackson had waged upon the banks, and to his en-

deavor to secure an almost exclusive specie currency. Nearly every bank in the country was compelled to suspend specie payment, and ruin pervaded all our great cities. Not less than two hundred and fifty houses failed in New York in three weeks. All public works were brought to a stand, and there was a general state of dismay. At the same time, we were involved in an inglorious war with the Seminole Indians in Florida, which reflected no honor upon our arms. The slavery question was rising in portentous magnitude, introducing agitation, rage, and mob violence, in almost every city and village of the land.

There was an insurrection in Canada against the British Government, which came near involving us in a war with that nation. A party of Canadian insurgents had rendezvoused on Navy Island, in the Niagara River, opposite the village called Fort Schlosser, on the American side. A small steamboat, called "The



BURNING OF "THE CAROLINE."

Caroline," which was suspected of having carried ammunition and supplies to the insurgents, was moored to the American shore. The British commander, regardless of territorial rights, sent an armed force across the river, attacked the steamer, killed several



of her defenders, applied the torch to the boat, and sent it in flames over the Falls of Niagara. The circumstance called forth a long and angry correspondence with the British Government; and, in the exasperations of the hour, we barely escaped war.

About the same time, there also arose a contest between Maine and Great Britain respecting boundary-lines; and there was the angry mustering of hosts, in preparation for battle. With all these troubles on his hands, the four years which Mr. Van Buren spent in the White House must have been years of anxiety and toil. Still, he was anxious for a re-election. Gen. Jackson did every thing in his power to aid him. But public sentiment was now setting so strongly against the Administration, that the Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, was chosen President, and Mr. Van Buren was permitted to retire to the seclusion of Kinderhook.

He had ever been a prudent man, of frugal habits, and, living within his income, had now fortunately a competence for his declining years. His unblemished character, his commanding abilities, his unquestioned patriotism, and the distinguished positions which he had occupied in the government of the country, secured to him, not only the homage of his party, but the respect of the whole community. It was on the 4th of March, 1841, that Van Buren retired from the presidency. From his fine estate at Lindenwald, he still exerted a powerful influence upon the politics of the country. In 1844, his friends made strenuous efforts to have him renominated for the presidency. The proslavery portion of the Democratic party, however, carried the day; and James K. Polk of Tennessee received the nomination. Again, in 1848, the Free-soil Democrats brought forward his name for the presidency. Three hundred thousand votes were cast in his favor. Gen. Taylor, however, the Whig candidate, was the choice of the people. From this time until his death, on the 24th of July, 1862, at the age of eighty years, he resided at Lindenwald, a gentleman of leisure, of culture, and of wealth; enjoying, in a healthy, vigorous old age, probably far more happiness than he had before experienced amidst the stormy scenes of his active life. He was surrounded by friends, and his own cheerful disposition gilded every hour. Martin Van Buren was a great and good man; and no one will question his right to a high position among those who have been the successors of Washington in the occupancy of the presidential chair.



## CHAPTER IX.

### WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

Birth and Ancestry. — Enters United-States Army. — Is promoted. — Resigns his Commission. — Sent to Congress. — Governor of Indiana Territory. — His Scrupulous Integrity. — Indian Troubles. — Battle of Tippecanoe. — War with Great Britain. — Governor Harrison's Perplexities and Labors. — The British repulsed. — Tecumseh slain. — False Accusations. — Speech in Congress. — Reply to Randolph. — Letter to President Bolivar. — Temperance Principles. — Views respecting Slavery. — Duelling. — Elected President. — Death.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON was born in Virginia, on the banks of the James River, at a place called Berkeley, the 9th of February,



RESIDENCE OF WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

1773. His father, Benjamin Harrison, was in comparatively opulent circumstances, and was one of the most distinguished men of

his day. He was an intimate friend of George Washington, was early elected a member of the Continental Congress, and was conspicuous among the patriots of Virginia in resisting the encroachments of the British crown. In the celebrated Congress of 1775, Benjamin Harrison and John Hancock were both candidates for the office of speaker. Mr. Harrison at once yielded to the illustrious patriot from the Bay State; and, seeing that Mr. Hancock modestly hesitated to take the chair, Mr. Harrison, who was a very portly man, and of gigantic strength, with characteristic good nature and playfulness seized Mr. Hancock in his athletic arms, and carried him, as though he were a child, to the seat of honor. Then turning around, with his honest, beaming face, he said to his amused associates, —

“Gentlemen, we will show Mother Britain how little we care for her by making a Massachusetts man our President whom she has excluded from pardon by a public proclamation.”

Like most men of large stature, Mr. Harrison was full of fun, and never liked to lose an opportunity for a joke. He was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; and he it was who made the ludicrous remark about “hanging” to Elbridge Gerry, to which we have referred in the life of Jefferson.

Mr. Harrison was subsequently chosen Governor of Virginia, and was twice re-elected. His son William Henry, of course, enjoyed in childhood all the advantages which wealth and intellectual and cultivated society could give. Having received a thorough common-school education, he entered Hampden Sidney College, where he graduated with honor soon after the death of his father. He then repaired to Philadelphia to study medicine under the instruction of Dr. Rush and the guardianship of Robert Morris, both of whom were, with his father, signers of the Declaration of Independence.

George Washington was then President of the United States. The Indians were committing fearful ravages on our north-western frontier. For the protection of the settlers, Gen. St. Clair was stationed, with a considerable military force, at Fort Washington, on the far-away waters of the then almost unexplored Ohio, near the spot where the thronged streets of Cincinnati are now spread out. Young Harrison, either lured by the love of adventure, or moved by the sufferings of families exposed to the most horrible outrages, abandoned his medical studies, and, notwithstanding the

remonstrances of his friends, entered the army, having obtained a commission of ensign from President Washington. He was then nineteen years of age.

The hostile Indians, who had originally been roused against us during the war of the Revolution by the Government of Great Britain, were spread over that vast wilderness now occupied by the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. They could bring many thousand warriors into the field, who had been supplied with ammunition and arms by the British authorities in Canada. Just before young Harrison received his commission, Gen. St. Clair, advancing into the wilderness with fourteen hundred men, was attacked by the Indians near the head waters of the Wabash, and utterly routed, with a loss of five hundred and thirty killed, and three hundred and sixty wounded. This awful defeat had spread consternation throughout the whole frontier.

Winter was setting in. Young Harrison, in form and strength, was frail; and many of his friends, thinking he would be unable to endure the hardships of a winter campaign, urged him to resign his commission. He, however, rejected this advice, and, crossing the country on foot to Pittsburg, descended the Ohio to Fort Washington. The first duty assigned him was to take command of a train of pack-horses bound to Fort Hamilton, on the Miami River, about forty miles from Fort Washington. It was a very arduous and perilous service; but it was so well performed as to command the especial commendation of Gen. St. Clair. A veteran frontiersman said of the young soldier, —

“I would as soon have thought of putting my wife into the service as this boy; but I have been out with him, and find those smooth cheeks are on a wise head, and that slight frame is almost as tough as my own weather-beaten carcass.”

Intemperance was at that time, as it ever has been, the bane of the army; but young Harrison, inspired by some good impulse, adopted the principles of a thorough temperance man, to which he adhered throughout his whole life. This enabled him to bear hardships and endure privations under which others sank to an early grave.

Soon he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and joined the army which Washington had placed under the command of Gen. Wayne to prosecute more vigorously the war with the Indians. The new general who succeeded St. Clair had acquired, by his



reckless daring, the title of "Mad Anthony." On the 28th of November, 1792, Gen. Wayne, with an army of about three thousand non-commissioned officers and privates, descended the Ohio from Pittsburg, a distance of twenty-two miles, and encamped for the winter. In the spring, he conveyed his troops in boats down the river to Fort Washington. Here Lieut. Harrison joined the "Legion," as Wayne's army was called. His soldierly qualities immediately attracted the attention and secured the confidence of his commander-in-chief.

Several months were lost in waiting for supplies before the army could move. In October, they advanced to a post which they called Greenville, about eighty miles due north. Here the army encamped for the winter. A strong detachment was sent some twenty miles farther north, to occupy the ground where St. Clair was defeated, to bury the remains of the dead, and to establish there a strong post, which they named Fort Recovery. In this enterprise, Lieut. Harrison is mentioned as having rendered conspicuous service.

The Indians, in the early spring, attacked the fort with the greatest determination. They were, however, repulsed in repeated assaults, and at length retired, having lost a large portion of their band.

Gen. Wayne then advanced with his whole army some sixty miles north to the junction of the Au Glaize and Maumee Rivers, where he constructed a strong fort. On the 20th of August, as he was continuing his march down the Maumee, he encountered the Indians in great force, lying in ambush. Their numbers were estimated at two thousand. A bloody battle ensued, in which both parties fought with the utmost desperation. The savages were driven howling into the woods, their villages were burned, and their cornfields destroyed. This signal discomfiture broke their spirit, and they implored peace. Again Lieut. Harrison signaled himself, and obtained from his commanding officer the following commendation:—

"Lieut. Harrison was in the foremost front of the hottest battle. His person was exposed from the commencement to the close of the action. Wherever duty called, he hastened, regardless of danger, and, by his efforts and example, contributed as much to secure the fortunes of the day as any other officer subordinate to the commander-in-chief."



Lieut. Harrison was promoted to the rank of captain, and was placed in command at Fort Washington. The British military posts in the north-west were about this time surrendered to the National Government; and Capt. Harrison was employed in occupying them, and in supplying them with provisions and military stores. While thus employed, he married a daughter of John Cleves Symmes, one of the frontiersmen who had established a thriving settlement on the banks of the Maumee.

In 1797, Capt. Harrison, then twenty-four years of age, resigned his commission in the army, and was appointed Secretary of the North-western Territory, and *ex officio* Lieutenant-Governor, Gen. St. Clair being then Governor of the territory. At that time, the law in reference to the disposal of the public lands was such, that no one could purchase in tracts less than four thousand acres. This inured to the benefit of the rich speculator; and the poor settler could only purchase at second-hand, and at a greatly advanced price. Mr. Harrison, in the face of violent opposition, succeeded in obtaining so much of a modification of this unjust law, that the land was sold in alternate tracts of six hundred and forty and three hundred and twenty acres. The North-western Territory was then entitled to one delegate in Congress, and Capt. Harrison was chosen to fill that office.

In the spring of 1800, the North-western Territory was divided by Congress into two portions. The eastern portion, comprising the region now embraced in the State of Ohio, was called "The Territory north-west of the Ohio." The western portion, which included what is now called Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, was called "The Indiana Territory." William Henry Harrison, then twenty-seven years of age, was appointed by John Adams Governor of the Indiana Territory, and, immediately after, also Governor of Upper Louisiana. He was thus the ruler over almost as extensive a realm as any sovereign upon the globe. He was Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and was invested with powers nearly dictatorial over the now rapidly-increasing white population. The ability and fidelity with which he discharged these responsible duties may be inferred from the fact that he was four times appointed to this office,—first by John Adams, twice by Thomas Jefferson, and afterwards by President Madison.

When he commenced his administration, there were but three white settlements in that almost boundless region, now crowded

with cities, and resounding with all the tumult of wealth and traffic. One of these settlements was on the Ohio, nearly opposite Louisville; one at Vincennes, on the Wabash; and the third a French settlement.

Gov. Harrison discharged his arduous duties with such manifest justice, that no one ventured to question his integrity. During his administration, he effected thirteen treaties with the Indians, by which the United States acquired sixty millions of acres of land. Gov. Harrison was sole commissioner, and every treaty he formed received the sanction of the President and Senate of the United States. He had ample opportunities to enrich himself; for he could confirm grants of land to individuals, his sole signature giving a title which could not be questioned: but he never held a single acre by a title emanating from himself. The frontiers of civilization are always occupied by a lawless class of vagabonds, who shrink from no outrages: these men abused the Indians in every way which passion or interest could dictate. In a communication to the Government, July, 1801, Gov. Harrison says,—

“All these injuries the Indians have hitherto borne with astonishing patience. But, though they discover no disposition to make war upon the United States, I am confident that most of the tribes would eagerly seize any favorable opportunity for that purpose; and, should the United States be at war with any European nations who are known to the Indians, there would probably be a combination of more than nine-tenths of the Northern tribes against us, unless some means are made use of to conciliate them.”

Mr. Jefferson was now President, and humanely made great exertions to protect the Indians, and to induce them to abandon their wild hunting-life, and to devote themselves to the cultivation of the land. In 1804, Gov. Harrison obtained a cession from the Indians of all the land between the Illinois River and the Mississippi.

A territorial legislature was soon organized for the rapidly-increasing population, over which the governor presided with that dignity, courtesy, and unswerving integrity, which secured to him universal respect. By nature, he had much kindness of heart; and his affability of manners, and his tact in meeting all varieties of human character, rendered him greatly beloved. His

magnanimous devotion to the public interest was such, that he several times appointed decided political opponents to offices of trust which he deemed them eminently fitted to fill. He was so cautious to avoid the appearance of evil, that he would not keep the public money on hand, but always made his payments by drafts upon Washington. It has been said that no man ever disbursed so large an amount of public treasure with so little difficulty in adjusting his accounts.

For twelve years, he was Governor of the Territory of Indiana. A wealthy foreigner, by the name of M'Intosh, loudly accused the governor of having defrauded the Indians in the treaty of Fort Wayne. The governor demanded investigation in a court of justice; and not only was he triumphantly acquitted, but the jury brought in a verdict against M'Intosh for damages to the amount of four thousand dollars. Gov. Harrison, having thus obtained the perfect vindication of his character, distributed one-third of the sum to the orphan children of those who had died in battle, and restored the remainder to M'Intosh himself.

The proprietor of the land upon which the city of St. Louis now stands offered him nearly half of the whole town for a merely nominal sum if he would assist in building up the place. So nice was his sense of honor, that he declined the offer, lest it might be said that he had used his official station to promote his private interests. In a few years, that property was worth millions. A large tract of land near Cincinnati had been sold, in the early settlement of the country, under an execution against the original proprietor, for a very small sum. At length, after the property had become immensely valuable, it was found, that, by some defective proceedings in the court, the sale was not valid; and the legal title was vested in Mrs. Harrison and another individual, as heirs-at-law. The lofty spirit of integrity which animated Gen. Harrison led him instantly to discriminate between a *legal* and an *equitable* title. He obtained the consent of the co-heir, and immediately relinquished the whole property to the purchasers. These incidents surely reveal a character of very unusual magnanimity, disinterestedness, and generosity.

The vast wilderness over which Gov. Harrison reigned was filled, as we have mentioned, with many tribes of Indians. About the year 1806, two extraordinary men, twin-brothers, of the Shawnee tribe, rose up among them. One of these was called Te-

cumseh, or "The Crouching Panther;" the other, Olliwacheca, or "The Prophet." Tecumseh was not only an Indian warrior, but a man of great sagacity, far-reaching foresight, and indomitable perseverance in any enterprise in which he might engage. He was inspired with the highest enthusiasm, and had long regarded with dread and with hatred the encroachment of the whites upon the hunting-grounds of his fathers. His brother, the Prophet, was an orator, who could sway the feelings of the untutored Indian as the gale tossed the tree-tops beneath which they dwelt.

But the Prophet was not merely an orator: he was, in the superstitious minds of the Indians, invested with the superhuman dignity of a medicine-man, or a magician. With an enthusiasm unsurpassed by Peter the Hermit rousing Europe to the crusades, he went from tribe to tribe, assuming that he was specially sent by the Great Spirit. In the name of his divine Master, he commanded them to abandon all those innovations which had been introduced through the white man, to return to the customs of their fathers, and to combine together for the extermination of the pale-faces. In co-operation with him, his heroic brother Tecumseh traversed thousands of miles of the forest, visiting the remoter tribes, announcing to them the divine mission of his brother, and seeking to enlist their co-operation. No discouragements chilled the zeal of these extraordinary and determined men. They probably wrought themselves up to the full conviction that they were commissioned by the Great Spirit.

The Prophet had occasionally protracted meetings for exhortation and prayer, in which, through successive days, he plied all the arts of devotion and persuasion to fire the hearts of his followers. Two years were thus employed by these two brothers.

In the summer of 1808, the Prophet established his encampment on the banks of the Tippecanoe, a tributary of the Upper Wabash. The measures of Tecumseh and the Prophet, in organizing this formidable conspiracy, had been conducted as secretly as possible; but the suspicions of the Government began to be aroused. To allay these suspicions, the Prophet visited Gov. Harrison, and, in an exceedingly insidious and plausible speech, stated that he had no designs whatever of rousing his people to hostilities; that he sought only their moral and religious improvement.

A large number of the Indians accompanied him. He often



preached to them in the presence of the governor; and his two great topics were the evils of war and of whiskey-drinking. His power over them had become so great, that by no persuasions of the whites could one of his followers be induced to take a drop of intoxicating drink. Still rumors were continually reaching Gov. Harrison, that the Indians were making extensive preparations for hostilities.

In his earnest solicitude to learn the facts in the case, he sent urgent invitations for both Tecumseh and the Prophet to visit him. Tecumseh at length came to Vincennes in proud array, with four hundred plumed warriors completely armed. A council was holden on the 12th of August, 1809. The governor was quite unprepared for the appearance of a host so formidable. Assuming, however, that all was friendly, he met the proud chieftain, whom we call a savage, to deliberate upon the state of affairs. The governor was attended by the judges of the Supreme Court, a few army officers, and a number of citizens. A small body-guard, consisting merely of a sergeant and twelve men, were drawn up at a little distance. Tecumseh still affirmed, in a very dignified speech which he made to the governor, that he had no intention of making war: but he very boldly declared that it was his intention and endeavor to combine all the tribes for the purpose of putting a stop to all further encroachments by the whites; that not another acre of land should be ceded to them, without the consent of all the tribes; and that those chiefs who had recently made treaties by which they had disposed of lands to the United States should all be put to death.

This statement led to indignant remonstrance on the part of Gov. Harrison. As he was speaking, Tecumseh interrupted him, and in angry tones, and with violent gesticulations, declared that he had cheated the Indians. Immediately his warriors, who were squatted upon the grass around, sprang to their feet, and began to brandish their war-clubs in the most threatening manner. Gov. Harrison rose from his arm-chair, and drew his sword. The army officers gathered around him. The citizens seized brick-bats, and such other weapons as they could lay their hands on; and the guard came rushing forward, ready to open fire upon the Indians.

But Gov. Harrison calmly ordered them not to fire. Then, turning to Tecumseh, he told him that he should hold no more

communication with him, but that, as he had come under protection of the council-fire, he might depart unharmed. Tecumseh



HARRISON'S INTERVIEW WITH TECUMSEH.

and his companions retired to their encampment. That night the militia of Vincennes were under arms, every moment expecting an attack. The night, however, passed without any alarm. In the morning, Tecumseh called upon the governor, expressed regret for his conduct the day before, and reiterated his declaration that he had no hostile intentions, but was still firm in his position that no more land should be ceded to the whites without the consent of the chiefs of all the tribes; and that the treaty which a few of the chiefs had recently entered into with the governor at Fort Wayne, he and his confederate tribes would regard as null and void.

Soon after this, Gov. Harrison, anxious to conciliate, visited Tecumseh at his camp on the Tippecanoe River, a branch of the Upper Wabash, some two hundred miles above Vincennes. He was politely received by the Indian chieftain; but he was informed, in language courteous but decided, that, though the Indians were

very unwilling to go to war with the United States, they were determined that the land recently ceded should not be given up, and that no other treaty should ever be made without the consent of all the tribes. This was ridiculously assuming that all the land on the continent belonged to the Indians in common, and that tribes on the St. Lawrence could not enter into a treaty without the consent of tribes upon the Gulf.

Months rolled on, while Tecumseh and the Prophet were busy in their hostile preparations. Marauding bands of Indians, whom they professed to be unable to control, were perpetrating innumerable annoyances. Horses were stolen, houses plundered; and the frontier settlements, which had now become quite numerous, were thrown into a state of great alarm. Tecumseh set out on a journey to enlist the Southern Indians in his confederacy. The posture of affairs became so threatening, that it was decided that the governor should visit the Prophet's town with an armed force, to observe what was going on, and to overawe by an exhibition of power, but to avoid hostilities if possible. Nearly a thousand troops were collected for this enterprise at Fort Harrison, on the Wabash, about sixty miles above Vincennes.

The army commenced its march on the 28th of October, 1812. Conscious of the bravery and sagacity of their enemies, they moved in two bands, on each side of the Indian trail, over the prairies, in such order that they could instantly be formed into line of battle, or thrown into a hollow square. Their route led them along the east bank of the Wabash, through an open prairie country. Early in November, they approached the Valley of the Tippecanoe, and encamped within ten miles of the Prophet's town. The next morning, the 5th, as they resumed their march, several parties of Indians were seen prowling about; but they evaded all attempts at communication, replying only to such endeavors with defiant and insulting gestures. When they had arrived within three miles of the town, three Indians of rank made their appearance, and inquired why Gov. Harrison was approaching them in so hostile an attitude. After a short conference, arrangements were made for a meeting the next day, to agree upon terms of peace.

But Gov. Harrison was too well acquainted with the Indian character to be deceived by such protestations. Selecting a favorable spot for his night's encampment, he took every pre-



caution against surprise. His troops were posted in a hollow square, and slept upon their arms. Each corps was ordered, in case of an attack, to maintain its position at every hazard, until relieved. The dragoons were placed in the centre, and were directed, should there be any alarm, immediately to parade, dismounted, and hold themselves in readiness to relieve the point assailed. The most minute arrangements were given to meet every conceivable contingency.

The troops threw themselves upon the ground for rest; but every man had his accoutrements on, his loaded musket by his side, and his bayonet fixed. The wakeful governor, between three and four o'clock in the morning, had risen, and was sitting in conversation with his aides by the embers of a waning fire. It was a chill, cloudy morning, with a drizzling rain. In the darkness, the Indians had crept as near as possible, and just then, with a savage yell, rushed, with all the desperation which superstition and passion most highly inflamed could give, upon the left flank of the little army. The savages had been amply provided with guns and ammunition by the English. Their war-whoop was accompanied with an incessant shower of bullets.

The camp-fires were instantly extinguished, as the light aided the Indians in their aim. With hideous yells, the Indian bands rushed on, not doubting a speedy and an entire victory. But Gen. Harrison's troops stood as immovable as the rocks around them until the day dawned: they then made a simultaneous charge with the bayonet, and swept every thing before them. The wretched Indians found the predictions of their Prophet utterly false; for the bullets and the bayonets of the white man pierced their bodies with appalling slaughter. The Prophet was present to witness this terrible defeat of his picked braves. The Indians, even when most reckless, were careful to conceal themselves as much as possible behind trees and rocks; consequently, in most of their battles, they lost but few in killed and wounded: but in this case, when they fled to the swamp, they left sixty-one dead upon the field, and one hundred and twenty bleeding and helpless.

Though the victory was entire, the loss of the Americans was fully equal to that of the Indians.

Gen. Harrison was exposed like all his men. One bullet passed through the rim of his hat; another struck his saddle, and, glancing, hit his thigh; a third severely wounded the horse on which he



rode. His coolness and good generalship were so conspicuous as to add greatly to his reputation; and subsequently the battle of Tippecanoe became a watchword to inspire the zeal of those who were elevating him to the presidency of the United States. After burying the dead and taking care of the wounded, they burned the Indian town, and destroyed every thing which could aid the savages in their future hostilities; and returned to Vincennes.

Tecumseh was then far away in the South, endeavoring to rouse the Indians there. But the tribes in the North-west, disappointed by the false predictions of the Prophet, and disheartened by their defeat, began to send deputies to Vincennes to secure peace. Soon, however, Tecumseh returned; our second war with Great Britain commenced; and the savages were drawn into an alliance with the English, and were animated to renew hostilities with more desperation than ever before.

Gov. Harrison had now all his energies tasked to the utmost. The British, descending from the Canadas, were of themselves a very formidable force; but with their savage allies, rushing like wolves from the forest, searching out every remote farm-house, burning, plundering, scalping, torturing, the wide frontier was plunged into a state of consternation which even the most vivid imagination can but faintly conceive. The war-whoop was resounding everywhere through the solitudes of the forest. The horizon was illuminated with the conflagration of the cabins of the settlers. Gen. Hull had made the ignominious surrender of his forces at Detroit. Under these despairing circumstances, Gov. Harrison was appointed by President Madison commander-in-chief of the North-western army, with orders to retake Detroit, and to protect the frontiers.

To meet the emergency, he was invested with almost unlimited authority. His army was to be collected from widely dispersed cabins, where the women and the children would thus be left unprotected. His men were entirely ignorant of discipline. His officers were inexperienced. There was then neither railroad nor steamboat; and almost every thing for the supply of the army had to be transported over the wildest, roughest roads, from the Atlantic States. To reach Detroit, it was necessary for him to traverse a swampy forest, two hundred miles in extent, without roads; and the wilderness was ranged by the prowling Indian, ever liable to burst upon him from his ambush. At Detroit, he

would encounter the trained soldiers of England, veterans of a hundred battles, under leaders of renown, and aided by ferocious bands of savages, amply supplied with the most deadly weapons of war. The English had also quite a fleet which commanded the waters of Lake Erie.

It would be difficult to place a man in a situation demanding more energy, sagacity, and courage; but Gen. Harrison was found equal to the position, and nobly and triumphantly did he meet all the responsibilities. A minute account of his adventures, his midnight marches, his bloody conflicts, his sufferings from storms of sleet and snow, from famine, sickness, exposure, destitution, would fill volumes. The renown of such a man as Gen. Harrison is not cheaply gained. It is purchased at a great price. The Government, as we have mentioned, invested him with almost absolute power; but, with all his tireless energy, never did he in the slightest degree abuse that trust.

He was a man of winning address, of a gentle and affectionate spirit, and possessed native powers of persuasive eloquence which were very rare. A scene is described at one of their encampments which will illustrate many others. The little army was groping through the forest, on the banks of the Au Glaise. Night came on, dark, stormy, and with sheets of rain. The low ground was soon flooded. They had no axes, could build no fires; and, as they had got ahead of their baggage, they had no food. Some took their saddles, and sat upon them; others found logs; others stood in the water, and leaned against the trunks of trees. Thus they passed the miserable night. Gen. Harrison shared all these discomforts with his men. As he sat in the pouring rain, wrapped in his cloak, with his staff around him, he called upon one of his officers, who had a fine voice, to sing a humorous Irish song, with the chorus, —

“Now’s the time for mirth and glee:  
Sing and laugh and dance with me.”

The troops joined in the refrain; and thus, in that black night of storm and flood, the forest echoed with sounds of merriment.

Gen. Harrison had succeeded in raising a force of about six thousand men. He soon became satisfied that Detroit could be taken only in a winter-campaign, when the vast morasses, being frozen, could be traversed by the army. His right wing was ren-

devoured at Sandusky. About eight hundred men, under Gen. Winchester, marched to the mouth of the River Raisin, where they were attacked, routed, and compelled to surrender. All the wounded were massacred by the Indians. Dreadful was the suffering that this disaster caused; and it was a long time before it could be known who were prisoners, and who had fallen beneath the bloody knives of the savages. This unfortunate expedition had been undertaken without the knowledge of Gen. Harrison. Having heard of the movement, he did every thing in his power, but in vain, to avert the disastrous results. Nine hundred of the most promising young men of the North-west were lost in this melancholy adventure. This was the latter part of January, 1813. Gen. Harrison, who had now received the appointment of major-general in the United-States army, found it necessary to go into winter-quarters; though he fitted out three expeditions against the Indians, one only of which proved successful.

The Government at length, urged by Gen. Harrison, prepared for the construction of a fleet to command the waters of the Lake. Gen. Harrison had an unstable body of men at Fort Meigs; the enlistments being for short periods, and it being impossible to hold the men after the term of service had expired. The most arduous of Gen. Harrison's labors were his almost superhuman exertions to raise an army. In August of 1814, the British, with their savage allies, appeared before Sandusky, which was protected by Fort Stephenson. They approached by their vessels along the lake, and also, with a land force, through the forest, followed by their howling allies. They were, however, after a stern battle, handsomely repulsed. On the 10th of September, Commodore Perry, with his gallant squadron, met the British fleet, and, at the close of an heroic struggle, had the pleasure of announcing that they were ours. Gen. Harrison was now prepared to carry the war home to the enemy. He crossed the lake, took possession of Sandwich, the British retreating before him; and then sent a brigade across the strait, which seized Detroit. The British retreated up the Thames, pursued by the Americans. Proctor led the British forces, and Tecumseh led his savage allies. The foe made a stand on the banks of the Thames. The battle was short and decisive. Our dragoons rode impetuously over the ranks of the British, and compelled an almost instantaneous surrender. The Indians continued the fight a little longer, but were

at length dispersed, leaving their chief, Tecumseh, dead upon the field. All the stores of the British army fell into the hands of the victors.

Gen. Harrison won the love of his soldiers by always sharing with them their fatigue. His whole baggage, while pursuing the foe up the Thames, was carried in a valise; and his bedding consisted of a single blanket lashed over his saddle. Thirty-five British officers, his prisoners of war, supped with him after the battle. The only fare he could give them was beef roasted before the fire, without bread or salt.

This great victory gave peace to the North-western frontier; and Gen. Harrison decided to send a large portion of his force to Niagara, to assist in repelling the foe, who were concentrating there. Fifteen hundred men were transported by the fleet to Buffalo, which they reached on the 24th of October, 1814.

In consequence of some want of harmony with the Secretary of War, Gen. Harrison resigned his commission, much to the regret of President Madison: he, however, still continued to be employed in the service of his country. He was appointed to treat with the Indian tribes; and he conducted the negotiations so skillfully, as to secure the approbation both of the Indians and of the United-States Government. In 1816, Gen. Harrison was chosen a member of the National House of Representatives to represent the District of Ohio. It was not possible that a man who had occupied posts so responsible, who had often thwarted the attempted frauds of Government contractors, and who had defended the weak against the powerful, should not have some bitter enemies. In the contest which preceded his election to Congress, he had been accused of corruption in respect to the commissariat of the army. Immediately upon taking his seat, he called for an investigation of the charge. A committee was appointed: his vindication was triumphant; and a high compliment was paid to his patriotism, disinterestedness, and devotion to the public service. For these services, a gold medal was presented to him, with the thanks of Congress.

In Congress he proved an active member; and, whenever he spoke, it was with a force of reason, and power of eloquence, which arrested the attention of all the members. When the celebrated debate came up respecting the conduct of Gen. Jackson during the Seminole war, he eloquently supported the resolutions of



censure, while he paid a noble tribute to the patriotism and good intentions of the reckless and law-defying general. In the splendid speech which he made upon this occasion, which was alike replete with eloquence, true philosophy, and the most exalted patriotism, he said,—

“I am sure, sir, that it is not the intention of any gentleman upon this floor to rob Gen. Jackson of a single ray of glory; much less to wound his feelings, or injure his reputation. If the resolutions pass, I would address him thus: ‘In the performance of a sacred duty, imposed by their construction of the Constitution, the representatives of the people have found it necessary to disapprove of a single act of your brilliant career. They have done it in the full conviction, that the hero who has guarded her rights in the field will bow with reverence to the civil institutions of his country; that he has admitted as his creed, that the character of the soldier can never be complete without eternal reverence to the character of the citizen. Go, gallant chief, and bear with you the gratitude of your country; go, under the full conviction, that, as her glory is identified with yours, she has nothing more dear to her than her laws, nothing more sacred than her Constitution. Even an unintentional error shall be sanctified to her service. It will teach posterity that the Government which could disapprove the conduct of a Marcellus will have the fortitude to crush the vices of a Marius.’”

Gen. Jackson was not a man to bear the slightest opposition. These noble sentiments, as uttered by Gen. Harrison, he never forgot or forgave.

In 1819, Harrison was elected to the Senate of Ohio; and in 1824, as one of the presidential electors of that State, he gave his vote for Henry Clay, and in the same year was chosen to the Senate of the United States. The half-crazed John Randolph made one of his characteristic attacks, virulent and senseless, accusing him of being a black-cockade Federalist, and of associating with gentlemen of that party. Mr. Harrison rose, and, with that dignified and attractive eloquence which he had at his command, said,—

“I am seriously charged with the heinous offence of associating with Federal gentlemen. I plead guilty. I respected the Revolutionary services of President John Adams, and have paid him that courtesy which was due to him as a man and as Chief Magistrate. I have also associated with such men as John Marshall and James

A. Bayard. Is the acknowledgment of such guilt to throw me out of the pale of political salvation?

"On the other hand, I am on intimate terms with Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Gallatin, and the whole Virginia delegation, among whom I have many kinsmen and dear friends. These were my principal associates in Philadelphia, in whose mess I have often met the gentleman who is now my accuser, and with whom I have spent some of the happiest hours of my life. It is not in my nature to be a violent or proscriptive partisan; but I have given a firm support to the Republican administrations of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. I hope the senator from Virginia is answered."

In the latter part of the year 1828, President John Quincy Adams appointed Gen. Harrison minister plenipotentiary to the Republic of Colombia; but Gen. Jackson, immediately after his inauguration in 1829, implacably recalled him. While he was in Colombia, the proposition was agitated of laying aside the Constitution, and investing Bolivar with the dictatorship. Gen. Harrison addressed a letter to Bolivar, who was his personal friend, entreating him not to accede to this arrangement. This document was written with so much elegance of diction, such glowing eloquence, and such enlightened statesmanship, as to secure the admiration of every one who read it.

A few sentences only can we quote as specimens of the whole:—

"A successful warrior is no longer regarded as entitled to the first place in the temple of fame. In this enlightened age, the hero of the field, and the successful leader of armies, may, for the moment, attract attention; but it is such as will be bestowed upon the passing meteor, whose blaze is no longer remembered when it is no longer seen. To be esteemed eminently great, it is necessary to be eminently good. The qualities of the hero and the general must be devoted to the advantage of mankind before he will be permitted to assume the title of their benefactor. If the fame of our Washington depended upon his military achievements, would the common consent of the world allow him the pre-eminence he possesses? The victories at Trenton, Monmouth, and York, brilliant as they were, exhibiting, as they certainly did, the highest grade of military talents, are scarcely thought of. The source of the veneration and esteem which are entertained for his character by every class of politicians—the monarchist and aristocrat, as well as the republican—is to be found in his undeviating and exclusive

devotedness to his country. No selfish consideration was ever suffered to intrude itself into his mind. General, the course which he pursued is open to you; and it depends upon yourself to attain the eminence which he has reached before you."

Upon Gen. Harrison's return from Colombia to the United States, he retired to his farm at North Bend, on the Ohio, and, in the enjoyment of a humble competency, devoted himself to the peaceful pursuits of agriculture. With true Roman dignity, he accepted the office of clerk to the court of Hamilton County, as a means of adding to his limited income. In 1831, he was chosen to give the annual discourse before the agricultural society of that county.

Gen. Harrison had once owned a distillery; but, perceiving the sad effects of whiskey upon the surrounding population, he promptly abandoned the business, at a very considerable pecuniary sacrifice. In his very admirable address, he, with great fervor and eloquence, entreats his brother-farmers not to convert their corn into that poison which was found so deadly both to the body and to the soul. "I speak more freely," said he, "of the practice of converting the material of the staff of life into an article which is so destructive of health and happiness, because, in that way, I have sinned myself; but in that way I shall sin no more."

The subject of slavery was at this time fearfully agitating our land. Gen. Harrison, though very decidedly opposed to any interference on the part of the General Government with slavery as it existed in the States, was still the warm friend of universal freedom. In replying to the accusation of being friendly to slavery, he said, —

"From my earliest youth, and to the present moment, I have been the ardent friend of human liberty. At the age of eighteen, I became a member of an abolition society established at Richmond, Va., the object of which was to ameliorate the condition of slaves, and procure their freedom by every legal means. The obligations which I then came under I have faithfully performed. I have been the means of liberating many slaves, but never placed one in bondage. I was the first person to introduce into Congress the proposition, that all the country above Missouri should never have slavery admitted into it."

Again: the high Christian integrity of this noble man is developed in the reply to a letter from a gentleman wishing to know

his views upon the subject of duelling. The whole letter was admirable, and was one of the most effective attacks upon that absurd and barbarous system that has ever been made. In conclusion, he says, —

“In relation to my present sentiments, a sense of higher obligations than human laws or human opinions can impose has determined me never on any occasion to accept a challenge, or seek redress for a personal injury, by a resort to the laws which compose the code of honor.”

In 1836, the friends of Gen. Harrison brought him forward as a candidate for the presidency. Mr. Van Buren was the Administration candidate, supported by the almost omnipotent influence of Gen. Jackson. The opposition party could not unite, and four candidates were brought forward; but the canvass disclosed the popularity of Gen. Harrison, as he received seventy-three electoral votes without any general concert among his friends. The Democratic party triumphed over their disorganized opponents, and Mr. Van Buren was chosen president.

At the close of Mr. Van Buren's four years of service, he was renominated by his party, and William Henry Harrison was unanimously nominated by the Whigs, by a convention in which twenty-three out of the twenty-six States were represented. John Tyler, of Virginia, was nominated for the vice-presidency. The contest, as usual, was very animated. Gen. Jackson gave all his influence to prevent Gen. Harrison's election; but his triumph was signal. He received two hundred and thirty-four electoral votes, leaving but sixty for Mr. Van Buren. He was then sixty-seven years of age. It may be doubted if any of his predecessors had taken the presidential chair better prepared for its responsibilities, in ability, education, experience, and immaculate integrity, than was William Henry Harrison.

His passage from his plain home to the Capitol presented a constant succession of brilliant pageants and enthusiastic greetings.

A vast concourse attended his inauguration. His address on the occasion was in accordance with his antecedents, and gave great satisfaction; expressing the fear that we were in danger of placing too much power in the hands of the President, and declaring his intention of exercising the powers intrusted to him with great moderation.



The cabinet which he formed, with Daniel Webster at its head as Secretary of State, was one of the most brilliant with which any President had ever been surrounded. Never were the prospects of an administration more flattering, or the hopes of the country more sanguine. In the midst of these bright and joyous prospects, Gen. Harrison was seized by a pleurisy-fever, and, after a few days of violent sickness, died on the 4th of April; just one short month after his inauguration. In the delirium of his sickness, as if aware that death was approaching, and fancying that he was addressing his successor, he said, —

“Sir, I wish you to understand the principles of the Government: I wish them carried out. I ask nothing more.”

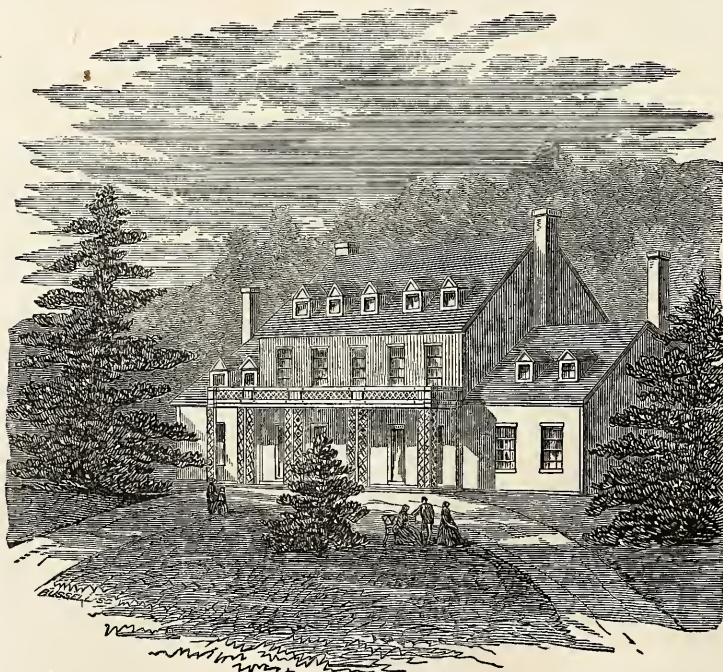
These were his last words. His death was universally regarded as one of the greatest of national calamities. The nation mourned with unfeigned grief. Never, then, since the death of Washington, were there, throughout our land, such demonstrations of sorrow. A careful scrutiny of his character and life must give him a high position in the affection and the esteem of every intelligent mind. Not one single spot can be found to sully the brightness of his fame; and, through all the ages, Americans will pronounce with love and reverence the name of William Henry Harrison.

## CHAPTER X.

### JOHN TYLER.

His Parentage. — Education and Scholarship. — Early Distinction. — Success at the Bar and in Political Life. — Democratic Principles. — Course in the Senate. — Elected Vice-President. — Accession to the Presidency. — False Position, and Embarrassments. — Retirement from Office. — Joins in the Rebellion. — Death.

JOHN TYLER was the favored child of affluence and high social position. His father possessed large landed estates in Virginia,



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and was one of the most distinguished men of his day; filling the offices of Speaker of the House of Delegates, Judge of the Supreme Court, and Governor of the State. John was born in Charles-city County, Va., the 29th of March, 1790. He enjoyed,

in his youthful years, all the advantages which wealth and parental distinction could confer. At the early age of twelve, he entered William and Mary College; and graduated, with much honor, when but seventeen years old. His commencement address, upon "Female Education," was pronounced to be a very masterly performance. After graduating, he devoted himself with great assiduity to the study of the law, partly with his father, and partly with Edmund Randolph, one of the most distinguished lawyers of Virginia.

At nineteen years of age, he commenced the practice of the law. His success was rapid and astonishing. It is said that three months had not elapsed ere there was scarcely a case on the docket of the court in which he was not retained. When but twenty-one years of age, he was almost unanimously elected to a seat in the State Legislature. He connected himself with the Democratic party, and warmly advocated the measures of Jefferson and Madison. For five successive years, he was elected to the Legislature, receiving nearly the unanimous vote of his county.

Sympathizing cordially with the Administration in the second war with England, when the British were ravaging the shores of Chesapeake Bay, he exerted himself strenuously to raise a military force to resist them. When but twenty-six years of age, he was elected a member of Congress. Here he acted earnestly and ably with the Democratic party, opposing a national bank, internal improvements by the General Government, a protective tariff, and advocating a strict construction of the Constitution, and the most careful vigilance over State rights. His labors in Congress were so arduous, that, before the close of his second term, he found it necessary to resign, and retire to his estate in Charles County to recruit his health.

He, however, soon after consented to take his seat in the State Legislature, where his influence was powerful in promoting public works of great utility. Many of his speeches developed statesmanlike views, and powers of eloquence of a high order. With a reputation thus constantly increasing, he was chosen by a very large majority of votes, in 1825, governor of his native State, — a high honor; for Virginia had many able men to be competitors for the prize. His administration was signally a successful one. He urged forward internal improvements, strove to remove sec-

tional jealousies, and did much to rouse the people to an appreciation of their own interests. His popularity secured his re-election.

John Randolph, a brilliant, erratic, half-crazed man, then represented Virginia in the Senate of the United States. A portion of the Democratic party was displeased with Mr. Randolph's wayward course, and brought forward John Tyler as his opponent; considering him the only man in Virginia of sufficient popularity to succeed against the renowned orator of Roanoke. Mr. Tyler was the victor; and, in taking his seat in the Senate, he said to his Democratic constituents, —

“The principles on which I have acted, without abandonment in any one instance, for the last sixteen years, in Congress, and in the legislative hall of this State, will be the principles by which I shall regulate my future political life.”

John Quincy Adams was then President of the United States, having been placed in that office by the Whigs. Mr. Tyler, immediately upon his election, declared, in a public letter, his uncompromising hostility to the principles of Mr. Adams's administration.

“In his message to Congress,” wrote Mr. Tyler, “I saw an almost total disregard of the federative principle, a more latitudinarian construction of the Constitution than has ever before been insisted on. From the moment of seeing that message, all who have known any thing of me have known that I stood distinctly opposed to this administration.”

In accordance with these professions, upon taking his seat in the Senate, he joined the ranks of the opposition. He opposed the tariff; he spoke against and voted against the bank, as unconstitutional; he strenuously opposed all restrictions upon slavery, resisted all projects of internal improvements by the General Government, and avowed his sympathy with Mr. Calhoun's views of nullification; he declared that Gen. Jackson, by his opposition to the nullifiers, had abandoned the principles of the Democratic party. Such was Mr. Tyler's record in Congress, — a record in perfect accordance with the principles which he had always avowed.

Perhaps there was never hate more unrelenting than that with which John C. Calhoun and Andrew Jackson regarded each other. Mr. Tyler was in sympathy with Mr. Calhoun; voted with him;



and it thus happened that Mr. Tyler was found in opposition to Jackson's administration. This hostility to Jackson caused Mr. Tyler's retirement from the Senate, after his election to a second term. The Legislature of Virginia passed resolutions, calling upon their senators in Congress to vote to *expunge* from the journal of the Senate a vote censuring Gen. Jackson for his usurpation of power in removing the deposits of public money from the United-States Bank, and placing them in State banks. Mr. Tyler had cordially approved of this censure, avowing his convictions that Gen. Jackson had usurped powers which the Constitution did not confer upon him. He had also very emphatically expressed his belief that it was the duty of the representative to obey the directions of his constituents. Under these circumstances, he felt constrained to resign his seat.

Returning to Virginia, he resumed the practice of his profession. There was a split in the Democratic party. His friends still regarded him as a true Jeffersonian, gave him a public dinner, and showered compliments upon him. He had now attained the age of forty-six. His career had been very brilliant. In consequence of his devotion to public business, his private affairs had fallen into some disorder; and it was not without satisfaction that he resumed the practice of the law, and devoted himself to the culture of his plantation.

Soon after this, he removed to Williamsburg, for the better education of his children; and again took his seat in the Legislature of Virginia. He had thus far belonged very decidedly to the Calhoun or States-rights party. The complications of party in this country are inexplicable. There have been so many diverse and clashing interests, the same name being often used in different sections to represent almost antagonistic principles, that one need not be surprised to find Mr. Tyler, without any change of views, taking the name of a Southern Whig, still opposing the tariff, the bank, and advocating, to the fullest extent, State rights. He was still what the North would call a Democrat.

By the Southern Whigs, he was sent to the national convention at Harrisburg to nominate a President in 1839. The majority of votes was given to Gen. Harrison, a genuine Whig, much to the disappointment of the South, who wished for Henry Clay. To conciliate the Southern Whigs, and to secure their vote, the convention then nominated John Tyler for Vice-President. It

was well known that he was not in sympathy with the Whig party in the North: but the Vice-President has but very little power in the Government; his main and almost only duty being to preside over the meetings of the Senate. Thus it happened that a Whig President, and, in reality, a Democratic Vice-President, were chosen.

In 1841, Mr. Tyler was inaugurated Vice-President of the United States. In one short month from that time, President Harrison died; and Mr. Tyler thus found himself, to his own surprise and that of the whole nation, an occupant of the presidential chair. This was a new test of the stability of our institutions, as it was the first time in the history of our country that such an event had occurred. Mr. Tyler was at his home in Williamsburg when he received the unexpected tidings of the death of President Harrison. He hastened to Washington, and, on the 6th of April, was inaugurated into his high and responsible office. He was placed in a position of exceeding delicacy and difficulty. All his life long, he had been opposed to the main principles of the party which had brought him into power. He had ever been a consistent, honest man, with an unblemished record. Gen. Harrison had selected a Whig cabinet. Should he retain them, and thus surround himself with counsellors whose views were antagonistic to his own? or, on the other hand, should he turn against the party which had elected him, and select a cabinet in harmony with himself, and which would oppose all those views which the Whigs deemed essential to the public welfare? This was his fearful dilemma.

President Tyler deserves more charity than he has received. He issued an address to the people, carefully worded, which gave general satisfaction. He invited the cabinet which President Harrison had selected to retain their seats. He recommended a day of fasting and prayer, that God would guide and bless us.

The Whigs carried through Congress a bill for the incorporation of the fiscal bank of the United States. The President, after ten days' delay, returned it with his veto. He suggested, however, that he would approve of a bill drawn up upon such a plan as he proposed. Such a bill was accordingly prepared, and privately submitted to him. He gave it his approval. It was passed without alteration, and he sent it back with his veto. Here commenced the open rupture. It is said that Mr.

Tyler was provoked to this measure by a published letter from the Hon. John M. Botts, a distinguished Virginia Whig, containing the following sentences, which severely touched the pride of the President:—

“Capt. Tyler is making a desperate effort to set himself up with the *Locofocos*: but he'll be headed yet; and I regret to say that it will end badly for him. He will be an object of execration with both parties,—with the one, for vetoing our bill, which was bad enough; with the other, for signing a worse one: but he is hardly entitled to sympathy. You'll get a bank bill, but one that will serve only to fasten him, and to which no stock will be subscribed; and, when he finds out that he is not wiser in banking than all the rest of the world, we may get a better.”

The opposition now exultingly received the President into their arms. The party which elected him denounced him bitterly. All the members of his cabinet, excepting Mr. Webster, resigned. The Whigs of Congress, both the Senate and the House, held a meeting, and issued an address to the people of the United States, proclaiming that all political alliance between the Whigs and President Tyler was at an end.

Still the President attempted to conciliate. He appointed a new cabinet of distinguished Whigs and Conservatives, carefully leaving out all strong party men. Though opposed to a protective tariff, he gave his sanction to a tariff-bill, which passed Congress. Thus he placed himself in a position in which he found that he could claim the support of neither party. The Democrats had a majority in the House; the Whigs, in the Senate. Mr. Webster soon found it necessary to resign, forced out by the pressure of his Whig friends.

Thus the four years of Mr. Tyler's unfortunate administration passed sadly away. No one was satisfied. The land was filled with murmurs and vituperation. Whigs and Democrats alike assailed him. More and more, however, he brought himself into sympathy with his old friends the Democrats; until, at the close of his term, he gave his whole influence to the support of Mr. Polk, the Democratic candidate, for his successor. Several very important measures were adopted during his administration. Situated as he was, it is more than can be expected of human nature that he should, in all cases, have acted in the wisest manner; but it will probably be the verdict of all candid men, in a care-

ful review of his career, that John Tyler was placed in a position of such exceeding difficulty, that he could not pursue any course which would not expose him to the most severe denunciation.

Mr. Tyler earnestly and eloquently opposed any protective tariff. In glowing periods he depicted the abounding prosperity of the North, and the dilapidation and decay of the South. The fact no one could deny, that the North was bounding forward in the most brilliant career of prosperity, while the South presented a general aspect of paralysis and desolation. "The protective tariff," said Mr. Tyler, "is the cause of our calamities and our decay. We buy dear, and sell cheap. That is the simple secret. The tariff raises the price of all we buy, and diminishes the demands for our products abroad by diminishing the power of foreign nations to buy them."

The reply to this cannot be better given than in the words of Mr. Parton, in his "Life of Andrew Jackson:" "The Southern system—be it wrong or be it right, be it wise or be it unwise—is one that does not attract emigrants; and the Northern system does. That is the great cause. From the hour when Columbus sprang, exulting, upon these Western shores, the great interest of America has been emigration. That country of the New World has prospered most which has attracted the greatest number of the best emigrants by affording them the best chance to attain the sole object of emigration,—the improvement of their condition; and that portion of that country has outstripped the rest which offered to emigrants the most promising field of labor. For a MAN, view him in what light you may, is the most precious thing in the world: he is wealth in its most concentrated form. A stalwart, virtuous, skilful, thoughtful man, progenitor of an endless line of such, planted in our Western wilds to hew out home and fortune with his own glorious and beautiful right hand and heart, is worth, to the State that wins him, a thousand times his weight in Kohinor. Such have poured into the Northern States, in an abounding flood, these fifty years. Behold what they have wrought!

"Such emigrants go to the South in inconsiderable numbers, partly because from infancy they learn to loathe the very name of slavery. They sicken at the thought of it. They shrink from contact with it. They take Wesley's characterization of it in the most literal acceptation of the words, and esteem it the sum of all villainies, — that solely possible crime which includes in its single



self all the wrong that man can wreak on man. Whether they are right or whether they are wrong in so thinking, is not a question here. They think so; and, if they did not, they would not go in great numbers to the South, because it does not afford to a man with six children and a hundred dollars the immediate opportunities for profitable and congenial labor which the North affords. On the prairies, in the forests of the North, the struggling emigrant finds himself surrounded by neighbors whose condition, antecedents, prospects, social standing, are all similar to his own. There is no great proprietor to overtop him. There is no slave with whom he has to compete. He forgets that there is any such thing as a graduated social scale, and feels, that, by virtue of his manhood alone, he stands on a level with the best."

It has been well said, that nothing is ever settled in this world until it is settled right. There can be no peace, and no abiding prosperity, until the brotherhood of man is recognized. True democracy demands *impartial suffrage and equal rights for all*; and, if any thing be certain, this is certain, — that *true democracy* will never rest content until this shall be attained. Whoever, therefore, places himself in opposition to this fundamental principle of true democracy, does but perpetuate conflict, and postpone the long-looked-for hour when the bitter strife of parties shall cease. It is in vain for the demon of aristocracy and of exclusive privilege to clothe itself in the garb of *democracy*, and assume its sacred name. The masses cannot long be thus deceived, and those defrauded of their rights *will not* acquiesce unresistingly.

It is not slavery alone which saps the foundations of public prosperity: it is any attempt to keep any portion of the people ignorant and degraded, and deprived of privileges conferred upon others no more deserving. This was the political vice of John Tyler and his associates. They strained every nerve to keep millions of their fellow-countrymen in the South in a state of the most abject servility, ignorance, and degradation; and then, as they looked around upon the general aspect of rags, impoverishment, and degradation in the South, and contrasted it with the beauty and wealth and power of those States in the North where every man was encouraged to feel himself a *man*, and to educate to the highest possible degree his children, and to surround his home with every embellishment which taste and industry could create, they refused to admit the true cause for the difference.

In a beautiful strain of philosophic truth, the Hon. Mr. Dallas said in the Senate of the United States, in a debate upon this subject in 1862, "The lights of science and the improvements of art, which vivify and accelerate elsewhere, cannot penetrate, or, if they do, penetrate with dilatory inefficiency, among the operatives of the South. They are merely instinctive and passive. While the intellectual industry of other parts of this country springs elastically forward at every fresh impulse, and manual labor is propelled and redoubled by countless inventions, machines, and contrivances, instantly understood and at once exercised, the South remains stationary, inaccessible to such encouraging and invigorating aids. Nor is it possible to be blind to the moral effects of this species of labor upon those freemen among whom it exists. A disrelish for humble and hardy occupation, a pride adverse to drudgery and toil, a dread that to partake in the employments allotted to color may be accompanied also by its degradation, are natural and inevitable.

"When, in fact, the senator from South Carolina asserts that 'slaves are too improvident, too incapable of that minute, constant, delicate attention, and that persevering industry, which are essential to the success of manufacturing establishments,' he himself admits the defect in the condition of Southern labor by which the progress of his favorite section must be retarded. He admits an inability to keep pace with the rest of the world. He admits an inherent weakness,—a weakness neither engendered nor aggravated by the tariff."

These views, now that slavery is dead, are as practically important as ever; for they do conclusively show that it is one of the first principles of political economy that there should not be fostered in any community a servile and degraded class; that it should be the first endeavor of the State to inspire every individual, without a single exception, with the ambition to make the most of himself, intellectually, physically, and morally, that he possibly can. Every facility should be presented, which wisdom can devise, to promote this elevation of the whole community. Everywhere a poor, ignorant, degraded family is an element of weakness and impoverishment. But Mr. Tyler, from the beginning to the end of his career, was the earnest advocate of slavery,—of its perpetuation and extension.

On the 4th of March, 1845, he retired from the harassments of

office, to the regret of neither party, and probably to his own unspeakable relief. His first wife, Miss Letitia Christian, died in Washington in 1842; and in June, 1844, President Tyler was again married, at New York, to Miss Julia Gardiner, a young lady of many personal and intellectual accomplishments.

The remainder of his days Mr. Tyler passed mainly in retirement at his beautiful home, — Sherwood Forest, Charles-city County, Va. A polished gentleman in his manners, richly furnished with information from books and experience in the world, and possessing brilliant powers of conversation, his family circle was the scene of unusual attractions. With sufficient means for the exercise of a generous hospitality, he might have enjoyed a serene old age with the few friends who gathered around him, were it not for the storms of civil war which his own principles and policy had helped to introduce.

When the Great Rebellion rose, which the State-rights and nullifying doctrines of Mr. John C. Calhoun had inaugurated, President Tyler renounced his allegiance to the United States, and joined the Confederates. He was chosen a member of their Congress; and while engaged in active measures to destroy, by force of arms, the Government over which he had once presided, he was taken sick, and, after a short illness, died. There were but few to weep over his grave, excepting his own family, to whom he was much endeared, and the limited circle of his personal friends. His last hours must have been gloomy; for he could not conceal from himself that the doctrines which he had advocated were imperilling the very existence of the nation. Unfortunately for his memory, the name of John Tyler must forever be associated with all the misery and crime of that terrible Rebellion whose cause he openly espoused. It is with sorrow that history records that a President of the United States died while defending the flag of rebellion, which was arrayed in deadly warfare against that national banner which he had so often sworn to protect.

## CHAPTER XI.

### JAMES KNOX POLK.

Ancestry of Mr. Polk. — His Early Distinction. — His Success as a Lawyer. — Political Life — Long Service in Congress. — Speaker in the House. — Governor of Tennessee. — Anecdote. — Political Views. — Texas Annexation. — Candidate for the Presidency. — Mexican War. — Its Object and Results. — Retirement. — Sickness. — Death.

NEAR the south-western frontier of North Carolina, on the eastern banks of the Catawba, there is a region now called the



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County of Mecklenburg. In this remote, almost unexplored wilderness, a small settlement was commenced by the Scotch-Irish in the year 1735. Among these settlers, there were two brothers by the name of Polk. Both of them were men of much



excellence of character and of extensive influence. Early in the spring of 1775, news reached those distant settlers beneath the primeval forest of the atrocities which the crown of Great Britain was perpetrating against the liberties of this country, in Massachusetts. There were several public meetings held to discuss these wrongs.

At length, Col. Thomas Polk, the elder of these brothers, "well known and well acquainted in the surrounding counties, a man of great excellence and merited popularity," was empowered to call a convention of the representatives of the people. Col. Polk issued his summons; and there was a convention in Charlotte, the shire-town of the county, held on the 19th of May, 1775. About forty of the principal citizens of the county of Mecklenburg were present as delegates. At this meeting, the announcement was made, that the first blood of the Revolution had been shed in Lexington, Mass. The excitement was intense. Anxious deliberations were protracted late into the night, and resumed the next morning. People were, in the mean time, rapidly gathering in large numbers. Resolutions were at length adopted unanimously, which were read from the court-house steps by Col. Polk, declaring that "we, the citizens of Mecklenburg County, do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us to the mother-country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British crown; and that we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people."

This heroic and extraordinary declaration of independence was unquestionably the first that was made. Col. Thomas Polk, and his brother Ezekiel, who resided then across the border, in South Carolina, were among the most prominent men in this movement. In the course of the war which ensued, Lord Cornwallis established his headquarters at Charlotte, which he called the hot-bed of rebellion, and the hornet's nest. But little more is known respecting Ezekiel Polk, who was the grandfather of James Knox Polk, the eleventh President of the United States. He left a son, Samuel, who married Jane Knox. Samuel Polk was a plain, unpretending farmer. James was the eldest son of a family of six sons and four daughters. He was born in Mecklenburg County, N.C., on the 2d of November, 1795.

In the year 1806, with his wife and children, and soon after followed by most of the members of the Polk family, Samuel Polk

emigrated some two or three hundred miles farther west to the rich valley of the Duck River. Here in the midst of the wilderness, in a region which was subsequently called Maury County, they reared their log huts, and established their new home. In the hard toil of a new farm in the wilderness, James K. Polk spent the early years of his childhood and his youth. His father, adding the pursuits of a surveyor to that of a farmer, gradually increased in wealth until he became one of the leading men of the region. His mother was a superior woman, of strong common sense and earnest piety. Young James often accompanied his father on his surveying tours, and was frequently absent from home for weeks together, climbing the mountains, threading the defiles, exposed to all the vicissitudes of the weather, and not a little in peril from hostile Indians. To a boy of reflective spirit, there is much in such a life to bring out all there is noble in his nature.

Very early in life, James developed a taste for reading, and expressed the strongest desire to obtain a liberal education. His mother's training had rendered him methodical in his habits, had taught him punctuality and industry, and had inspired him with lofty principles of morality. James, in the common schools, rapidly became a proficient in all the common branches of an English education. His health was frail; and his father, fearing that he might not be able to endure a sedentary life, got a situation for him behind the counter, hoping to fit him for commercial pursuits.

This was to James a bitter disappointment. He had no taste for these duties, and his daily tasks were irksome in the extreme. He remained in this uncongenial occupation but a few weeks, when, at his earnest solicitation, his father removed him, and made arrangements for him to prosecute his studies. Soon after, he sent him to Murfreesborough Academy. This was in 1813. With ardor which could scarcely be surpassed, he pressed forward in his studies, and in less than two and a half years, in the autumn of 1815, entered the sophomore class in the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill. Here he was one of the most exemplary of scholars, so punctual in every exercise, never allowing himself to be absent from a recitation or a religious service, that one of the wags of college, when he wished to aver the absolute certainty of any thing, was in the habit of saying, "It is as certain as that Polk will get up at the first call."

To every branch of a solid and an accomplished education he alike devoted his energies. He graduated in 1818 with the highest honors, being deemed the best scholar of his class, both in mathematics and the classics. He was then twenty-three years of age. Mr. Polk's health was at that time much impaired by the assiduity with which he had prosecuted his studies. After a short season of relaxation, he went to Nashville, and entered the office of Felix Grundy to study law. Mr. Grundy was a man of national fame, not only standing at the head of the bar in Nashville, but having also distinguished himself on the floor of Congress. Here Mr. Polk renewed his acquaintance with Andrew Jackson, who resided on his plantation, the Hermitage, but a few miles from Nashville. They had probably been slightly acquainted before. When Mrs. Jackson, with her two orphan boys, fled before the army of Cornwallis, she took refuge in Mecklenburg County, and for some time resided with the neighbors of Mr. Polk's father.

As soon as he had finished his legal studies, and been admitted to the bar, he returned to Columbia, the shire-town of Maury County, and opened an office. His success was rapid. Very seldom has any young man commenced the practice of the law more thoroughly prepared to meet all of its responsibilities. With rich stores of information, all his faculties well disciplined, and with habits of close and accurate reasoning, he rapidly gained business, and won fame.

Mr. Polk's father was a Jeffersonian Republican, and James K. Polk ever adhered to the same political faith. He was a popular public speaker, and was constantly called upon to address the meetings of his party friends. His skill as a speaker was such, that he was popularly called the Napoleon of the stump. He was a man of unblemished morals, genial and courteous in his bearing, and with that sympathetic nature in the joys and griefs of others which ever gave him troops of friends. There is scarcely any investment which a man can make in this world so profitable as pleasant words and friendly smiles, provided always that those words and smiles come honestly from the heart. In 1823, Mr. Polk was elected to the Legislature of Tennessee. Here he gave his strong influence towards the election of his friend, Andrew Jackson, to the presidency of the United States. He also procured the passage of a law designed to prevent duelling. From

principle, he was utterly opposed to the practice ; and it required no little moral courage for one, in those rude times and regions, to attempt the abrogation of that so-called "code of honor," obedience to which was deemed essential to the character of a chivalric gentleman.

Mr. Polk, as a "strict constructionist," did not think that the Constitution empowered the General Government to carry on a system of internal improvements in the States ; but, with Mr. Monroe, he deemed it important that the Government should have that power, and wished to have the Constitution amended that it might be conferred. Subsequently, however, with most of the Southern gentlemen, he became alarmed lest the General Government should become so strong as to undertake to interfere with slavery. He therefore gave all his influence to strengthen the State governments, and to check the growth of the central power.

In January, 1824, Mr. Polk married Miss Sarah Childress of Rutherford County, Tenn. His bride was altogether worthy of him, — a lady of beauty and of culture. Had some one then whispered to him that he was destined to become President of the United States, and that he should select for his companion one who would adorn that distinguished station, he could not have made a more fitting choice. The following anecdote is related of Mrs. Polk, when, in 1848, she was lady of the White House. It should be remembered that Mr. Polk was a Democrat, and Mr. Clay a Whig, and that they had been rival candidates for the presidency. There was quite a brilliant dinner-party at the President's. Henry Clay, as one of the most distinguished guests, was honored with a seat near Mrs. Polk, who as usual, by her courteous and affable manner, won the admiration of all her guests.

During the entertainment, Mr. Clay turned to her, and said, in those winning tones so peculiar to him, —

"Madam, I must say, that in my travels, wherever I have been, in all companies and among all parties, I have heard but one opinion of you. All agree in commending, in the highest terms, your excellent administration of the domestic affairs of the White House. But," continued he, looking towards her husband, "as for that young gentleman there, I cannot say as much. There is some little difference of opinion in regard to the policy of *his* course."



"Indeed," said Mrs. Polk, "I am glad to hear that *my* administration is popular; and, in return for your compliment, I will say, that, if the country should elect a Whig next fall, I know of no one whose elevation would please me more than that of Henry Clay. And I will assure you of one thing: if you do have occasion to occupy the White House on the 4th of March next, it shall be surrendered to you in perfect order from garret to cellar."

"Thank you, thank you!" exclaimed Mr. Clay: "I am certain that" — No more could be heard, such a burst of laughter followed Mrs. Polk's happy repartee. In the fall of 1825, Mr. Polk was chosen a member of Congress. The satisfaction which he gave to his constituents may be inferred from the fact, that for fourteen successive years, until 1839, he was continued in that office. He then voluntarily withdrew, only that he might accept the gubernatorial chair of his native State. In Congress he was a laborious member, a frequent and a popular speaker. He was always in his seat, always courteous; and, whenever he spoke, it was always to the point, and without any ambitious rhetorical display. Mr. Polk was the warm friend of Gen. Jackson, who had been defeated in the electoral contest by John Quincy Adams. This latter gentleman had just taken his seat in the presidential chair when Mr. Polk took his seat in the House of Representatives. He immediately united himself with the opponents of Mr. Adams, and was soon regarded as the leader of the Jackson party in the House.

The four years of Mr. Adams's administration passed away, and Gen. Jackson took the presidential chair. Mr. Polk had now become a man of great influence in Congress, and was chairman of its most important committee, — that of Ways and Means. Eloquently he sustained Gen. Jackson in all of his measures, — in his hostility to internal improvements, to the bank, to the tariff. The eight years of Gen. Jackson's administration ended, and the powers he had wielded passed into the hands of Martin Van Buren; and still Mr. Polk remained in the House, the advocate of that type of Democracy which those distinguished men upheld.

During five sessions of Congress, Mr. Polk was Speaker of the House. Strong passions were roused, and stormy scenes were witnessed; but Mr. Polk performed his arduous duties to very general satisfaction, and a unanimous vote of thanks to him was

passed by the House as he withdrew on the 4th of March, 1839. In his closing address, he said, —

“ When I look back to the period when I first took my seat in this House, and then look around me for those who were at that time my associates here, I find but few, very few, remaining. But five members who were here with me fourteen years ago continue to be members of this body. My service here has been constant and laborious. I can perhaps say what few others, if any, can, — that I have not failed to attend the daily sittings of this House a single day since I have been a member of it, save on a single occasion, when prevented for a short time by indisposition. In my intercourse with the members of this body, when I occupied a place upon the floor, though occasionally engaged in debates upon interesting public questions and of an exciting character, it is a source of unmingled gratification to me to recur to the fact, that on no occasion was there the slightest personal or unpleasant collision with any of its members.”

In accordance with Southern usage, Mr. Polk, as candidate for governor, canvassed the State. He was elected by a large majority, and on the 14th of October, 1839, took the oath of office at Nashville. In 1841, his term of office expired, and he was again the candidate of the Democratic party. But, in the mean time, a wonderful political revolution had swept over the whole country. Martin Van Buren had lost his re-election, and Gen. Harrison had been called triumphantly to the presidential chair. In Tennessee, the Whig ticket had been carried by over twelve thousand majority. Under these circumstances, the success of Mr. Polk was hopeless. Still he canvassed the State with his Whig competitor, Mr. Jones, travelling in the most friendly manner together, often in the same carriage, and, it is said, at one time sleeping in the same bed. Mr. Jones obtained the election by three thousand majority. Again, in 1843, the same gentlemen were competitors for the governorship, and again Mr. Polk was defeated.

And now the question of the annexation of Texas to our country agitated fearfully the whole land. It was a plan which originated with the advocates of slavery, that they might get territory to cut up into slave States, to counterbalance the free States which were being formed in the North-west. Texas was a province of Mexico. We were on friendly terms with that puny and distracted republic, and could find no plausible occasion to pick a quarrel with it. The

territory we coveted was in extent equal to the whole empire of France, and could be divided into six first-class States. The following plan was adopted to gain the prize : —

There was a wild, eccentric frontiersman, by the name of Sam Houston, who had abandoned civilization, and for six years had lived among the Indians, adopting their habits. He was a man of very considerable native ability. In his character, there was a singular blending of good and bad qualities. He had so far commended himself to the Cherokee Indians, that they had chosen him as one of their chiefs. This man gathered a pretty numerous band of lawless adventurers, and entered Texas to wrest it from Mexico as a private speculation. The plan was distinctly announced ; and from all parts of the country there was a very extensive emigration to those wide and fertile plains of those who were in sympathy with the movement. They went strongly armed, and with abundant supplies furnished them from the South.

These men, settlers in Texas, in 1836 called a convention, issued a declaration of independence, formed a constitution establishing perpetual slavery, and chose their intrepid leader, Sam Houston, their governor. A short, bloody, merciless war ensued. The Mexicans were utterly repulsed. Population from the United States rapidly flowed in. It was manifest to every one that Mexico could never regain her lost province. The first step was triumphantly accomplished. A few months after this, the second step was taken, and Congress acknowledged the independence of Texas. The Texans then sent an envoy to Washington, proposing the annexation of Texas to the American Union.

The friends of slavery generally were in favor of the movement. Mr. Benton said that nine slave States could be carved out of the majestic domain, each nearly equal to the State of New York. Most of the foes of slavery extension were opposed to the measure of annexation. Mr. Webster said, —

“Slavery in this country stands where the Constitution left it. I have taken an oath to support the Constitution, and I mean to abide by it. I shall do nothing to carry the power of the General Government within the just bounds of the States. I shall do nothing to interfere with the domestic institutions of the South, and the Government of the United States have no right to interfere therewith. But that is a very different thing from not interfering to prevent the extension of slavery by adding a large slave

country to this. Texas is likely to be a slaveholding country; and I frankly avow my unwillingness to do any thing that shall extend the slavery of the African race on this continent, or add another slaveholding State to this Union."

Thus the question of the annexation of Texas became national. Mr. Polk, as the avowed champion of annexation, became the presidential candidate of the proslavery wing of the Democratic party, and Dallas their candidate for the vice-presidency. He was elected by a majority, in the popular vote, of about forty thousand. In January, 1845, he left his home in Tennessee for Washington, having first had a long private interview with Gen. Jackson at the Hermitage. As he was ascending the Ohio River in a steamboat at one of the landings, a plain, farmer-like looking man, in his working-dress, pressed through the crowd, and, taking Mr. Polk's hand, said, —

"How do you do, colonel? I am glad to see you. I am a strong Democrat, and did all I could for you. I am the father of twenty-six children, who were all for *Polk, Dallas, and Texas.*"

On the 4th of March, 1845, Mr. Polk was inaugurated President of the United States. The verdict of the country in favor of annexation exerted its influence upon Congress; and the last act of the administration of President Tyler was to affix his signature to a joint resolution of Congress, passed on the 3d of March, approving of the annexation of Texas to the American Union. As Mexico still claimed Texas as one of her provinces, the Mexican minister, Almonte, immediately demanded his passports, and left the country, declaring the act of annexation to be an act hostile to Mexico. But Mexico was poor, feeble, and distracted, — a very feeble foe for this great republic to encounter. It would have been folly for her to attempt to strike a blow. She could only protest.

In his first message, President Polk urged that Texas should immediately, by act of Congress, be received into the Union on the same footing with the other States. In the mean time, Gen. Taylor was sent with an army into Texas to hold the country. He was sent first to the Nueces, which the Mexicans said was the western boundary of Texas. Then he was sent nearly two hundred miles farther west, to the Rio Grande, where he erected batteries which commanded the Mexican city of Matamoras, which was situated on the western banks.



The anticipated collision soon took place. We had pushed forward our army nearly two hundred miles, to the extreme western frontier of the disputed territory; had erected our batteries so as to command the Mexican city of Matamoras, on the opposite banks; had placed our troops in such a position, that lawless violence was sure to provoke retaliation; and then, as soon as the Mexican troops crossed the river, and a conflict ensued, President Polk announced to the country that war with Mexico existed.

"Now, Mexico," he said, "has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory, and shed American blood on American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are at war. As war exists, notwithstanding our efforts to avoid it, — exists by the act of Mexico herself, — we are called upon by every consideration of duty and patriotism to vindicate with decision the honor, rights, and interests of our country."

The war was pushed forward by Mr. Polk's administration with great vigor. Gen. Taylor, whose army was first called one of "observation," then of "occupation," then of "invasion," was sent forward to Monterey. The feeble Mexicans, in every encounter, were hopelessly and awfully slaughtered. The day of judgment alone can reveal the misery which was caused. It was by the ingenuity of Mr. Polk's administration that the war was brought on. Mr. Webster said, —

"I believe, that, if the question had been put to Congress before the march of the armies and their actual conflict, not ten votes could have been obtained in either House for the war with Mexico under the existing state of things."

"To the victors belong the spoils." Mexico was prostrate before us. Her capital was in our hands. We now consented to peace upon the condition that Mexico should surrender to us, in addition to Texas, all of New Mexico, and all of Upper and Lower California. This new demand embraced, *exclusive of Texas*, eight hundred thousand square miles. This was an extent of territory equal to nine States of the size of New York. Thus slavery was securing eighteen majestic States to be added to the Union. There were some Americans who thought this all right: there were others who thought it all wrong.

Mr. Polk's administration called for a grant of three millions of dollars, to be judiciously expended among the Mexicans to induce

them voluntarily to make this surrender. There was a split in the Democratic party; and some of the Northern Democrats succeeded in attaching to this appropriation what was called the "Wilmot Proviso," in these words:—

"Provided always that there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any territory on the continent of America which shall hereafter be acquired or annexed to the United States by virtue of this appropriation, or in any other manner whatsoever, except for crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted."

This was called also the *Thomas Jefferson Proviso*, as its language was copied from the ordinance originally draughted by him for the government of the North-western Territory. This restriction struck Mr. Polk and his friends with consternation. They did not wish to annex one single acre more of land, unless it could add to the area of slavery. The excitement which pervaded the Southern mind was violent in the extreme. Passionate speeches were made. Fiery resolutions were draughted by legislatures of the slaveholding States. The "dissolution of the Union" was threatened. Under the influence of the threat, the proviso was reconsidered and rejected.

At last, peace was made. We had wrested from Mexico territory equal, it has been estimated, to four times the empire of France, and five times that of Spain. In the prosecution of this war, we expended twenty thousand lives, and more than a hundred million of dollars. Of this money, fifteen millions were paid to Mexico.

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform."

Scarcely twenty years elapsed ere the whole of this vast region was consecrated to freedom. Gold was discovered in California. Northern emigrants rushed to gather it, carrying with them Northern love of liberty; and California became a free State. Mr. Polk, highly gratified with his success,—for he had no doubt that the whole region was to be consecrated to slavery,—presented the treaty to the Senate for its ratification on the 10th of March, 1848.

Justice to Mr. Polk's memory requires that his view of the righteousness and expediency of the war with Mexico should be given. While no one will dissent from the *facts* which have already been presented, there are many who will assert that the

reasons which Mr. Polk urges in the following sentences were not the true causes of the war. In his second Annual Message, December, 1846, he says, —

“The existing war with Mexico was neither provoked nor desired by the United States: on the contrary, all honorable means were resorted to to avoid it. After years of endurance of aggravated and unredressed wrongs on our part, Mexico, in violation of solemn treaty stipulations, and of every principle of justice recognized by civilized nations, commenced hostilities, and thus, by her own act, forced the war upon us. Long before the advance of our army to the left bank of the Rio Grande, we had ample cause of war against Mexico. The war has been represented as unjust and unnecessary; as one of aggression, on our part, on a weak and injured enemy. Such erroneous views, though entertained but by a few, have been widely and extensively circulated, not only at home, but have been spread throughout Mexico and the whole world.

“The wrongs which we have suffered from Mexico almost ever since she became an independent power, and the patient endurance with which we have borne them, are without a parallel in the history of modern civilized nations. Scarcely had Mexico achieved her independence, when she commenced the system of insult and spoliation which she has ever since pursued. Our citizens, engaged in lawful commerce, were imprisoned, their vessels seized, and our flag insulted in her ports. If money was wanted, the lawless seizure and confiscation of our merchant-vessels and their cargoes was a ready resource; and if, to accomplish their purposes, it became necessary to imprison the owners, captain, and crew, it was done. Rulers superseded rulers in Mexico in rapid succession; but still there was no change in this system of depredation. The Government of the United States made repeated reclamations on behalf of its citizens; but these were answered by the perpetration of new outrages.” In this general strain of remark he continues through several closely printed pages, and then says, “Such is the history of the wrongs which we have suffered and patiently endured from Mexico through a long series of years.”

“The annexation of Texas,” he continues, “constituted no just cause of offence to Mexico.” After giving a brief description of the previous history of Texas, and the nature of its union with

Mexico, as one of its confederate States, he says, "Emigrants from foreign countries were invited by the colonization-laws of the State and of the Federal Government to settle in Texas. This invitation was accepted by many of our citizens, in the full faith, that, in their new home, they would be governed by laws enacted by representatives elected by themselves; and that their lives, liberty, and property would be protected by constitutional guaranties similar to those which existed in the republic they had left. Under a government thus organized, they continued until the year 1835, when a military revolution broke out in the city of Mexico, which entirely subverted the Federal and State constitutions, and placed a military dictator at the head of the government.

"The people of Texas were unwilling to submit to this usurpation. Resistance to such tyranny became a high duty. The people of Texas flew to arms. They elected members to a convention, who, in the month of March, 1836, issued a formal declaration, that their 'political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, sovereign, and independent republic.'"

He then gives an account of the unsuccessful attempts of Mexico, by her armies, to conquer and reclaim her lost territory. "Upon this plain statement of facts," he continues, "it is absurd for Mexico to allege that Texas is still a part of her territory."

"But there are those," he adds, "who, conceding all this to be true, assume the ground, that the true western boundary of Texas is the Nueces, instead of the Rio Grande; and that, therefore, in marching our army to the east bank of the latter river, we passed the Texan line, and invaded the territory of Mexico." His explanation of this is too long and labored to be inserted here. The substance is, that the Texans claimed the Rio Grande as their boundary; that they had conquered it by the sword; that, as conquerors, they had a right to it; and that the United-States Government, having annexed Texas to the Union, was under every moral obligation to defend the boundaries which the Texans claimed.

This defence of the policy of the Government in the affairs relative to Texas and Mexico gives one a very just idea of the character of Mr. Polk's mind, and of the peculiarity of his abilities. The arguments he presents are plausible, rather than convincing.



One can scarcely conceive of such a document coming from the pen of Jefferson or of Webster.

On the 3d of March, 1849, Mr. Polk retired from office, having served one term. The next day was Sunday. On the 5th, Gen. Taylor was inaugurated as his successor. Mr. Polk rode to the Capitol in the same carriage with Gen. Taylor; and the same evening, with Mrs. Polk, he commenced his return to Tennessee. Very enthusiastic demonstrations of regard met him as he journeyed through the Southern States. At Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans, he was honored with splendid ovations. He had previously purchased a beautiful mansion in the heart of the city of Nashville.

He was then but fifty-four years of age. He had ever been strictly temperate in his habits, and his health was good. With an ample fortune, a choice library, a cultivated mind, and domestic ties of the dearest nature, it seemed as though long years of tranquillity and happiness were before him. But the cholera — that fearful scourge — was then sweeping up the Valley of the Mississippi. President Polk steamed up the river from New Orleans. On board the boat, he perceived the premonitory symptoms of the dread disease. When he reached his home, his system was much debilitated. A personal friend gives the following account of his last hours: —

“Having reached Nashville, he gave himself up to the improvement of his grounds, and was seen every day about his dwelling, aiding and directing the workmen he had employed, — now overlooking a carpenter, now giving instructions to a gardener, often attended by Mrs. Polk, whose exquisite taste constituted the element of every improvement. It is not a fortnight since I saw him on the lawn, directing some men who were removing decaying cedars. I was struck with his erect and healthful bearing, and the active energy of his manner, which gave promise of long life. His flowing gray locks alone made him appear beyond the middle age of life. He seemed in full health. The next day being rainy, he remained within, and began to arrange his large library. The labor of reaching books from the floor, and placing them on the shelves, brought on fatigue and slight fever, which, the next day, assumed the character of disease in the form of chronic diarrhœa.

“For the first three days, his friends felt no alarm; but, the disease baffling the skill of his physicians, Dr. Hay, his brother-in-

law, and family physician for twenty years, was sent for from Columbia. But the skill and experience of this gentleman, aided by the highest medical talent, proved of no avail. Mr. Polk continued gradually to sink from day to day. The disease was checked upon him four days before his death; but his constitution was so weakened, that there did not remain recuperative energy enough in the system for healthy re-action. He sank away so slowly and insensibly, that the heavy death-respirations commenced eight hours before he died. He died without a struggle, simply ceasing to breathe, as when deep and quiet sleep falls upon a weary man. About half an hour preceding his death, his venerable mother entered the room, and offered up a beautiful prayer to the King of kings and Lord of lords, committing the soul of her son to his holy keeping."

His death occurred on the 15th of June, 1849, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. His funeral was attended the following day, in Nashville, with every demonstration of respect. He left no children. As death drew near, he felt, as thousands of others have done, the need of the supports of Christianity, and, in that eleventh hour, received the rite of baptism at the hands of a Methodist clergyman.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ZACHARY TAYLOR.

Birth. — Emigration to Kentucky. — Neglected Education. — Enters the Army. — Life on the Frontier. — Battles with the Indians. — Campaign in Florida. — The Mexican War. — Palo Alto. — Resaca de la Palma. — Monterey. — Buena Vista. — Nominated for the Presidency. — Sufferings. — Death.

ZACHARY TAYLOR, the twelfth President of the United States, was born on the 24th of November, 1784, in Orange County, Va.



RESIDENCE OF ZACHARY TAYLOR.

His father, Col. Richard Taylor, was a Virginian of note, and a distinguished patriot and soldier of the Revolution. When Zachary was an infant, his father, with his wife and two other children, emigrated to Kentucky, where he settled in the pathless wilder-

ness, a few miles out from the present city of Louisville. He was one of the first settlers of that region; and as such, when the population increased, was honored with many responsible trusts.

In this rude frontier-home, far away from civilization and all its refinements, young Zachary could enjoy but few social or educational advantages. When six years of age, he attended a common school, and was then regarded as a bright, active boy, rather remarkable for bluntness, and decision of character. He was strong, fearless, and self-reliant, and manifested an eager desire to enter the army to fight the Indians who were ravaging the frontiers. There is little to be recorded of the uneventful years of his childhood on his father's large but lonely plantation. In 1808, his father succeeded in obtaining for him the commission of lieutenant in the United-States army; and he joined the troops which were stationed at New Orleans under Gen. Wilkinson. Soon after this, he married Miss Margaret Smith, a young lady from one of the first families in Maryland.

Our relations with England were, at this time, becoming very threatening; and we were upon the eve of our second war with that power. The English officials in Canada were doing their utmost to rouse the Indians against us. Immediately after the declaration of war in 1812, Capt. Taylor (for he had then been promoted to that rank) was put in command of Fort Harrison, on the Wabash, about fifty miles above Vincennes. This fort had been built in the wilderness by Gen. Harrison, on his march to Tippecanoe. It was one of the first points of attack by the Indians, led by Tecumseh. The works consisted simply of a row of log-huts for soldiers' barracks, with a strong block-house at each end. These buildings occupied one side of a square, the other three sides of which were composed of rows of high pickets. Its garrison consisted of a broken company of infantry, numbering fifty men, many of whom were sick.

Early in the autumn of 1812, the Indians, stealthily, and in large numbers, moved upon the fort. Their approach was first indicated by the murder of two soldiers just outside of the stockade. Capt. Taylor made every possible preparation to meet the anticipated assault. On the 4th of September, a band of about forty painted and plumed savages came to the fort, waiving a white flag, and informed Capt. Taylor, that, in the morning, their chief would come to have a talk with him. It was evident that their



object was merely to ascertain the state of things at the fort; and Capt. Taylor, well versed in the wiles of the savages, kept them at a distance.

The sun went down; the savages disappeared; the garrison slept upon their arms. One hour before midnight, the war-whoop burst from a thousand lips in the forest around, followed by the discharge of musketry, and the rush of the foe. Every man, sick and well, sprang to his post. Every man knew that defeat was not merely death, but, in case of capture, death by the most agonizing and prolonged torture. No pen can describe, no imagination can conceive, the scene which ensued. The savages succeeded in setting fire to one of the block-houses. There was a large amount of whiskey stored in the building; and the sheets of flame, flashing to the clouds, lit up the whole landscape with lurid brilliancy. The forest, the dancing savages, the yells of the assailants, the crackling and glare of the fire, the yelping of the dogs, the shrieks of the women (for there were several in the fort), who had become almost frantic with terror, the shouts of command, the incessant rattle of musketry,—all created a scene of terror which caused the stoutest heart to quail. Of course, no one thought of surrender. It was far better to perish by the bullet or the fire than to fall into the hands of the foe. Until six o'clock in the morning, this awful conflict continued. The savages then, baffled at every point, and gnashing their teeth with rage, retired. Capt. Taylor, for this gallant defence, was promoted to the rank of major by brevet.

Until the termination of the war, Major Taylor was placed in such situations, that he saw but little more of active service. When the army was reduced at the close of the war, the military board retained him, but assigned to him only the rank of captain. Not relishing this arrangement, Major Taylor resigned his commission, and returned to the peaceful pursuits of agricultural life on his plantation. Soon, however, the influence of friends regained for him his rank of major; and, returning to the army, he was sent far away into the depths of the wilderness, to Fort Crawford, on Fox River, which empties into Green Bay. Here there was but little to be done but to wear away the tedious hours as one best could. There were no books, no society, no intellectual stimulus. Thus with him the uneventful years rolled on. Gradually he rose to the rank of colonel. In the Black-Hawk War, which resulted

in the capture of that renowned chieftain, Col. Taylor took a subordinate but a brave and efficient part.

It is related of Col. Taylor, that, while engaged in this war, he was at one time pursuing Black Hawk with his Indian band, when they came to Rock River, which was then understood to be the north-west boundary of the State of Illinois. He had under his command a pretty large force of volunteers and a few regulars. The volunteers openly declared that they would not cross the river, as they had enlisted only for the defence of the State; and that they were not bound to march beyond the frontier into the Indian country. Col. Taylor, inclining to the same opinion, encamped upon the banks of the stream. But, during the night, orders came for him to follow up Black Hawk to the last extremity. The soldiers, hearing of this, assembled on the prairie, in a sort of town-meeting, to deliberate respecting what they should do. Col. Taylor was invited to attend. He was a man of few words, but had already attained some celebrity for his decisive actions.

Very quietly, for a time, he listened to their proceedings. At length, it came his turn to speak. "Gentlemen and fellow-citizens," said he, "the word has been passed on to me from Washington to follow Black Hawk, and to take you with me as soldiers. I mean to do both. There are the flat-boats drawn up on the shore; here are Uncle Sam's men drawn up behind you on the prairie."

There was no resisting this argument. In a few hours, they were all across the river, in hot pursuit of the foe. For twenty-four years, Col. Taylor was engaged in the defence of the frontiers, in scenes so remote, and in employments so obscure, that his name was unknown beyond the limits of his own immediate acquaintance. In the year 1836, he was sent to Florida to compel the Seminole Indians to vacate that region, and retire beyond the Mississippi, as their chiefs, by treaty, had promised they should do. The great mass of the Indians, denying the right of a few chiefs to sell the hunting-grounds of their fathers, refused to emigrate: hence the war. Col. Taylor was sent to capture or destroy them, wherever they might be found.

But little lasting fame can be acquired in fighting undisciplined savages. And still the American Indians were so brave and so cunning, appearing at this moment like a pack of howling wolves

in one spot, and the next moment dispersed, no one could tell where, that it required military qualities of a very high character successfully to contend with them. "War," says Napoleon, "is the science of barbarians." Indian warfare has ever been found a very good school in which to acquire the rudiments of that science. It requires constant vigilance, prompt action, patience, versatility of talent, to meet every emergency, and courage of the highest order to face death in its most appalling form.

The war with the Seminoles was long, bloody, and inglorious; and, with many of the American people, it was considered as, on the part of our Government, very unjust. Early in the winter of 1837, Col. Taylor, with a small army of about one thousand men, commenced a march into the interior to assail a large body of Seminole warriors who were encamped upon the banks of the great inland lake, Okeechobee. Their path, of one hundred and fifty miles, led through an unexplored wilderness, intersected by rivers, vast forests of oak and pine, and immense morasses of gloomy cypress-trees, with almost impenetrable underbrush, and interlacings of vines and pendent moss. There was no path through these vast solitudes, and no food could be gathered on the way for either man or beast.

Upon the northern shore of this lake there was a swamp, in the midst of whose recesses a small island was found. Here seven hundred Seminole warriors, having learned through their runners of the advance of the white man, had stationed themselves to give battle. They were well armed with rifles, and were unerring in their aim. Every man of them stood behind his protecting tree; and rarely has warfare presented greater peril than the men were exposed to in wading through that swamp in the face of such a foe. The Indians, nimble as deer, could vanish in an hour; and weeks and months might elapse before they could again be found. Under these circumstances, Col. Taylor made no reconnoissance, but fell instantly and impetuously upon them.

It was necessary to cross the swamp, three-quarters of a mile in breadth, through mud and water knee-deep, impeded by brush and weeds, and tall, coarse, wiry grass, before they could reach the island or hummock where the foe was stationed. As soon as Taylor's advance came within musket-shot, the Indians poured in upon them such a deadly fire, that the troops broke, and fled in a panic which nothing could check. A second line advanced more

cautiously, seeking such protection as the ground could afford, and keeping up a constant discharge of musketry: but the Indians, from their thicket, concentrated upon them such well-aimed shot, that, in a few minutes, every officer was struck down; and, in one company, but four men were left untouched.

In the mean time, other parties, by other approaches, had gained the hummock; and the Indians broke and fled. For three hours, this battle was fought with the utmost desperation on both sides; but the rout was complete. The Seminoles lost so large a number of their warriors, that they never ventured to give battle again. Their forces were afterwards divided into marauding bands, who gradually, crushed in spirit, surrendered, and were removed to the lands allotted to them beyond the Mississippi. Gen. Taylor lost, in killed, about thirty, including many of his most valuable officers. One hundred and twelve were wounded. These unhappy men were carried across the country, to Tampa Bay, on litters roughly constructed of poles and hides. This signal victory secured for Col. Taylor the high appreciation of the Government; and, as a reward, he was elevated to the rank of brigadier-general by brevet; and soon after, in May, 1838, was appointed to the chief command of the United-States troops in Florida. Broken bands of Indians, in a high state of exasperation, were for a long time wandering through the country, requiring the most strenuous exertions on the part of Col. Taylor to protect the scattered inhabitants.

Gen. Taylor, in his official account of the battle of Okeechobee, says, "The action was a severe one, and continued from half-past twelve until after three in the afternoon; a part of the time, very close and severe. We suffered much. The hostiles probably suffered, all things considered, equally with ourselves; they having left ten on the ground, besides, doubtless, carrying off many more, as is customary with them when practicable.

"As soon as the enemy were completely broken, I turned my attention to taking care of the wounded, to facilitate their removal to my baggage, where I ordered an encampment to be formed. I directed Capt. Taylor to cross over to the spot, and employ every individual whom he might find there, in constructing a small footway across the swamp. This, with great exertions, was completed in a short time after dark; when all the dead and wounded were carried over in litters made for that purpose, with



one exception, — a private of the Fourth Infantry, who was killed, and could not be found.

“And here, I trust, I may be permitted to say, that I experienced one of the most trying scenes of my life. And he who could have looked on it with indifference, his nerves must have been very differently organized from my own. Besides the killed, there lay one hundred and twelve wounded officers and soldiers, who had accompanied me one hundred and forty-five miles, most of the way through an unexplored wilderness, without guides; who had so gallantly beaten the enemy, under my orders, in his strongest position; and who had to be conveyed back through swamps and hummocks from whence we set out, without any apparent means of doing so.

“This service, however, was encountered and overcome; and they have been conveyed thus far, and proceeded on to Tampa Bay, on rude litters constructed with the axe and knife alone, with poles and dry hides; the latter being found in great abundance at the encampment of the hostiles. The litters were conveyed on the backs of our weak and tottering horses, aided by the residue of the command, with more ease and comfort than I could have supposed, and with as much as they could have been in ambulances of the most improved and modern construction.

“This column, in six weeks, penetrated one hundred and fifty miles into the enemy’s country; opened roads, and constructed bridges and causeways, when necessary, on the greater portion of the route; established two depots, and the necessary defences for the same; and, finally, overtook and beat the enemy in his strongest position. The results of which movements and battle have been the capture of thirty of the hostiles; the coming-in and surrendering of more than one hundred and fifty Indians and negroes, mostly of the former, including the chiefs, Oulatoochee, Tustanuggee, and other principal men; the capturing, and driving out of the country, six hundred head of cattle, upwards of one hundred head of horses, besides obtaining a thorough knowledge of the country through which we operated, a greater portion of which was entirely unknown except to the enemy.”

After two years of such wearisome employment amidst the everglades of the peninsula, Gen. Taylor obtained, at his own request, a change of command, and was stationed over the Department of the South-west. This field embraced Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama,

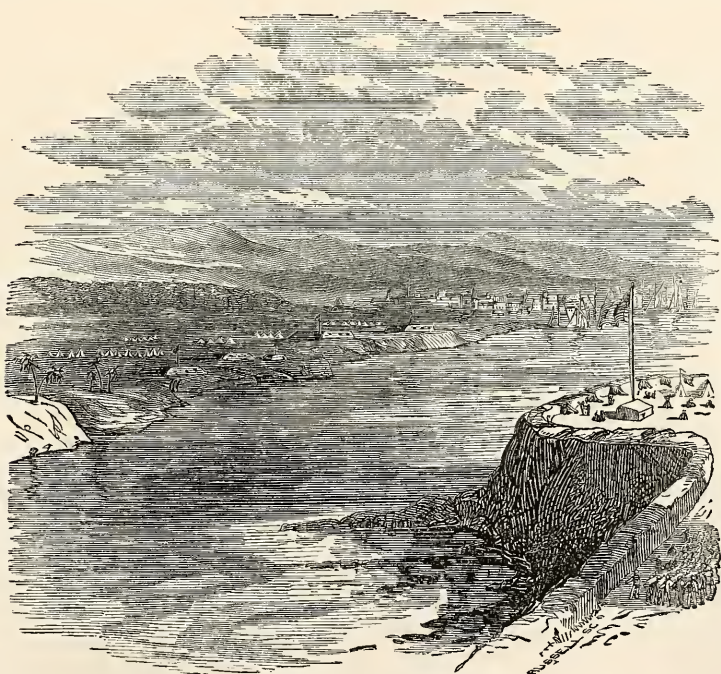
and Georgia. Establishing his headquarters at Fort Jessup, in Louisiana, he removed his family to a plantation, which he purchased, near Baton Rouge. Here he remained for five years, buried, as it were, from the world, yet faithfully discharging every duty imposed upon him.

It has been said that bayonets must not think. Gen. Taylor was an officer in the employment of the United-States Government, and, as such, was bound, as he supposed, to obey orders. In the spring of 1845, Congress passed a joint resolution for the annexation of Texas; and Gen. Taylor was directed to hold his troops in readiness for action on the Texan frontier. Into the question of the right or wrong of this annexation, we have no space to enter. Gen. Taylor's position was, however, embarrassing, as it *appeared* to be the desire of the Government (James K. Polk having just entered upon the presidency) that Gen. Taylor should take steps to bring on a collision with Mexico, of which the Government wished to avoid the responsibility. He therefore declined acting upon his own responsibility, silently waiting for implicit instructions.

The River Nueces was claimed by Mexico to be the original western boundary of Texas; but Secretary Marcy, in his despatch to Gen. Taylor, indicated the Rio Grande, nearly two hundred miles farther west, or rather south, as the boundary-line to be defended. He was, however, not ordered, at first, to advance to the Rio Grande; though he was directed to cross the Nueces River, and establish his corps of observation at Corpus Christi, on the *western* bank of the river. In August, 1845, he took his position here, with fifteen hundred troops, which, in November, was increased by re-enforcements to four thousand. Although, when at Corpus Christi, he was on ground which the Mexicans claimed, so long as he remained there, there was apparently no danger of collision with the Mexican authorities. He disregarded all the hints which came to him from Washington for a farther advance westward, until March, 1846, when there came explicit orders for him to advance to the Rio Grande. He accordingly took up his line of march over the boundless prairies which Mexico claimed as her territory. At the distance of about one hundred miles, he came to the waters of the Colorado. Here he found a Mexican force drawn up upon the western bank, but altogether too feeble to attempt to dispute his passage. Still the Mexican commander

sent a protest against what he regarded as the invasion of Mexico, and declared that the crossing of the Colorado would be regarded as a declaration of war.

Gen. Taylor, assuming that he was simply bound to obey orders, paid no attention to the warning, and crossed the river in sight of the Mexican detachment, who peaceably withdrew. Continuing his march, he sent a detachment to occupy Point Isabel, on the banks of an inlet opening into the Gulf, which was easily accessible by steamers, and had been fixed upon as the *dépôt* for army supplies. The main body of the army soon reached the Rio Grande, and commenced throwing up defensive works. Opposite them, upon the western bank, was the Mexican city of Matamoras. This invasion of their country, as the Mexicans deemed it, excited



GEN. TAYLOR ON THE RIO GRANDE.

great indignation. The Mexican commander, Gen. Ampudia, refused to hold any friendly intercourse with the Americans, and on the 12th of April, by orders from his Government, issued a summons to Gen. Taylor to return to the eastern bank of the Nueces, there to await the decision of the two Governments, who

were discussing the question of the true boundaries of Texas. He added, that the refusal to do this must inevitably lead to war. Our Government evidently wished to provoke hostilities. Gen. Taylor replied, that, as he was acting in a purely military capacity, his instructions would not allow him to retire to the Nueces ; and that, if war were the only alternative, he accepted it with regret.

Gen. Taylor wrote to the adjutant-general, April 6, 1846, "On our side, a battery for four eighteen-pounders will be completed, and the guns placed in battery, to-day. These guns bear directly upon the public square at Matamoras, and are within good range for demolishing the town. Their object cannot be mistaken by the enemy."

President Polk did not regard this as a hostile measure which the Mexicans had any right to resist. In the mean time, Commodore Sloat was sent to the Pacific with seven ships of war and nearly three thousand men, with secret orders to seize and occupy San Francisco and other Mexican ports on the Pacific as soon as he should hear of the existence of war between Mexico and the United States. Accordingly, on the 7th of July, 1846, hearing of the victories of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, he seized Monterey, in California, without resistance, and "annexed" California; announcing that "henceforth California will be a portion of the United States."

The whole territory we wrested from Mexico is estimated to be as large as England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Germany combined. In Cutt's "Conquest of California," he relates the following anecdote:—

"Just as we were leaving camp to-day, an old Apache chief came in, and harangued the general thus: 'You have taken Santa Fé. Let us go on and take Chihuahua and Sonora. We will go with you. You fight for the soil; we fight for plunder: so we will agree perfectly. These people are bad Christians: let us give them a good thrashing.'"

This interview between Gen. Kearney and the Indian warrior reminds one of the ancient anecdote of Alexander and the pirate.

The two armed forces upon the Matamoras remained in the presence of each other for a month. For more than two miles along each bank of the river, antagonistic batteries were facing each other, the guns shotted, and the artillery-men on both sides impatient for the order to fire. The situation naturally gave rise



to many causes of irritation on both sides. Brazos Santiago, the port of Matamoras, was blockaded by order of Gen. Taylor ; and two supply-ships for the Mexican army were ordered off the harbor. No one could deny that this was a hostile act. The deputy quartermaster of the American troops was murdered a short distance from camp. A small party of United-States soldiers, in pursuit of the murderers, fell upon a band of Mexicans, fired upon them, and put them to flight, taking possession of their camp. On their return, they were fired upon by another Mexican party, and one of their officers was killed. Thus, gradually, hostilities were inaugurated. A Mexican force crossed the Rio Grande above Matamoras. A squadron of United-States dragoons, sent to watch their movements, was attacked by the Mexicans, and, after the loss of ten men killed, was captured.

Point Isabel, which, as we have mentioned, was about twelve miles from Matamoras, was threatened by a force of fifteen hundred Mexicans ; and Gen. Taylor's connection with his dépôt of supplies was cut off. In order to open his communications, he left a garrison at Fort Brown, as his works opposite Matamoras were called, and, with the remainder of his army, set out on the 1st of May for Point Isabel. Immediately after his departure, the Mexicans opened fire upon Fort Brown from a battery on the western side of the river. The hostile battery was soon silenced ; but, after the lapse of a day, another and more formidable assault was made, the Mexicans having crossed the river, so as to attack the fort both in front and rear. After a spirited bombardment on both sides, night closed the conflict. In the night, by firing his eighteen-pounders at stated intervals, Major Brown, who was in command, signalled Gen. Taylor that he was surrounded. The next morning, the Mexicans resumed the assault. Their shells fell with such accuracy into the camp, that the garrison was driven into the bomb-proofs. Major Brown was mortally wounded. The command devolved upon Capt. Hawkins. He refused the summons to surrender, and endured the terrible bombardment until night again closed the scene. It was the 6th of May.

In the mean time, Gen. Taylor, having learned that the Mexicans had crossed the river with six thousand men, and that Fort Brown was surrounded and in great peril, commenced vigorously retracing his steps. The morning of the 8th dawned. The Mexi-

cans opened again their bombardment with new vigor and hope. The thunders of the cannonade floated over the vast prairies, and fell heavily upon the ears of the host advancing to the rescue of their comrades. About noon, Taylor's force encountered the Mexicans. Their appearance was very imposing, as three thousand men — infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with waving banners and gleaming armor — were drawn up on the broad prairie, in a line nearly a mile in length. Their right rested upon a dense thicket of chaparral, and their left was protected by a swamp. They had eleven field-pieces in position.

Gen. Taylor had about twenty-two hundred men; and was, on the whole, superior to the Mexicans in artillery, as he had ten guns, two of which were eighteen-pounders. He drew up his army in battle-array, about half a mile distant from the Mexicans. The field of Palo Alto, upon which these hostile armies were thus arrayed, was a vast plain, with nothing to obstruct the view. When both armies were ready, they stood for twenty minutes looking at each other, each hesitating to begin the work of death. At length a white puff of smoke burst from one of the Mexican guns, and a cannon-ball whistled over the heads of the American troops. This opened the battle. It was mainly an artillery contest on both sides. Gen. Taylor was not a tactician: he was simply a stern, straightforward, indomitable fighter. The combatants kept at quite a distance from each other, throwing their shot and shell often more than three-quarters of a mile. Thus the battle raged for five hours, each army being exposed to every shot of its antagonist. The superior skill of the American gunners, and our heavier weight of metal, gave us the advantage; and the loss was far greater on the Mexican side than on ours. The prairie-grass took fire, and sheets of flame rolled along ten feet high. Immense clouds of smoke enveloped the contending hosts. Round-shot, grape, and shells tore through the Mexican ranks with great slaughter. Our infantry, generally, threw themselves upon the ground; and most of the enemy's shot either fell short, or passed over their heads. Only four Americans were killed, and thirty-two wounded. The Mexican loss was two hundred and sixty-two.

When night came, and closed the conflict, neither party knew the effect of the cannonade upon the other. The Mexicans, however, confessed to a defeat, by retiring, under protection of the

darkness, to a new position some few miles in their rear. The little garrison at Fort Brown, while repelling the assault which was made upon them, listened with intense anxiety to the booming of the cannon on the field of Palo Alto. Should Gen. Taylor be cut off or driven back, the doom of the garrison was sealed.

The next morning, Gen. Taylor, finding that the enemy had disappeared, moved forward to the ground which the Mexicans had occupied. They had left behind them their dead, and many of their wounded. He pressed on in pursuit, and soon found them, at the distance of but about three miles from Fort Brown, formidably posted in a ravine called Resaca de la Palma. Scattered around were dense thickets of dwarf-oaks, almost impenetrable. Here the Mexican general, Arista, had so advantageously posted his forces, that it required desperate valor to break through. Again there was a battle. It commenced with artillery, and was followed up with infantry and cavalry. Several charges of great impetuosity were made. The Mexicans fought with great bravery and with disciplined valor. There was but little room for generalship. It was simply hard fighting. The forces were not far from equal on both sides; but the American soldiers, far more intelligent than their foes, fired with much more rapidity and with surer aim, and their victory was complete. Soon the whole Mexican line was seen on the retreat, having lost a thousand of their number in killed, wounded, and missing. The American loss did not exceed a hundred and fifty. The enemy fled across the river, hotly pursued. Enthusiastic were the cheers of the little band in Fort Brown as they saw the stars and stripes advancing so gloriously to their rescue.

The tidings of these victories aroused to an astonishing degree the martial spirit of the country. War was now thoroughly inaugurated. Those who had brought it on were well pleased. "Palo Alto" and "Resaca de la Palma" rang through the land as among the most glorious victories which had ever been achieved. "On to the halls of the Montezumas!" was the cry; and the few and feeble voices of remonstrance were drowned in the exultant shout. Congress authorized the President to accept fifty thousand volunteers. The rank of major-general by brevet was conferred on Gen. Taylor. Congressional resolutions complimented him, and the legislatures of several States lavished upon him their honors. These flattering testimonials were re-

ceived by Gen. Taylor with that unaffected simplicity which was one of his chief characteristics, and which was manifest in all the habits of his life. Though a strict disciplinarian, he could scarcely be distinguished, in his own personal appearance and dress, from any common farmer. These habits secured for him among his troops the *soubriquet* of "Old Rough and Ready."

An incident, which occurred soon after the victories just recorded, amusingly illustrates these traits in his character. After the relief of Fort Brown, Gen. Taylor prepared to follow up his victories by the bombardment of Matamoras. Accordingly, he went to Point Isabel to arrange for the co-operation of the navy. Commodore Conner, commanding in the Gulf, was as famed for particularity in dress as the general was for negligence in that respect. The commodore sent word that he would pay the general a visit of ceremony. This announcement caused much agitation in the mind of the kind-hearted officer. Without embarrassment, he could have welcomed his guest with a hearty grip of the hand to a seat on the camp-chest, and to a familiar talk over their plans; but that the most carefully-dressed officer in the navy, in command of its finest fleet, should pay him a visit of ceremony, in full uniform, and surrounded by all the retinue and equipments becoming his rank, was an anticipation almost too great for nerves that scarcely trembled in battle. The general, however, decided to receive the commodore, dressed in full uniform, — a sight that his officers, who had been associated with him for years, had never witnessed. Meanwhile Commodore Conner, quite unconscious of the flutter he had caused in the general's bosom, with the good sense of a gallant and accomplished gentleman, prepared for his interview with the plain old general, whose habits were well known to him.

At the time appointed, habited in plain white drilling, he came ashore, without any parade or any attendants. As soon as it was reported to Gen. Taylor that his visitor had landed, he hastened from some heavy work which he was superintending, rushed into his tent, brought from the bottom of his chest a uniform-coat that for years had been undisturbed, arrayed himself in it, with its standing-collar raised on one side three vacant button-holes above its legitimate height, and, in a very uncomfortable manner, seated himself for the reception. Commodore Conner quietly entered the tent of the commander-in-chief. The distinguished representatives



of the army and navy shook hands in mutual astonishment at each other's personal appearance. It is said, that, after that interview, Gen. Taylor took to linen roundabouts, of the largest dimensions, with more pertinacity than ever. It matters little whether this story be accurately true or not: it illustrates the character of the man.

Another amusing anecdote has been told illustrative of this trait of extreme simplicity, and disregard of the ordinary courtesies of life, in the character of Gen. Taylor. A gentleman who had been connected with the army, and was attached to the same regiment with Taylor, and had been intimately acquainted with him, visited Fort Jessup, in Louisiana, while the general was stationed in command at that post. He had not seen his old friend for some time, and was quite disappointed to learn that he was a hundred miles distant, attending a court-martial.

One day, the gentleman was walking out from the fort in a morning ramble, when he met "an old country codger," jogging along towards the camp, on a donkey. They exchanged salutations, according to the custom in those remote solitudes. But the figure of the donkey-rider, on his diminutive beast, was so comical, that the gentleman could not refrain from turning round, and gazing at him after he had passed. He was dressed in a coarse bombazine frock-coat and drab trousers. The bottoms of his trousers were tucked under his coarse, spattered boots. A black cravat was tied loosely round his neck. He had on a very coarse straw hat, whose broad brim, as he trotted along, flapped up and down; while, from beneath, long, uncombed hair fluttered in the breeze.

The gentleman continued his walk, and, upon returning to the fort, was cordially greeted by this comical-looking donkey-rider, who, to his surprise, he found to be his old friend, Gen. Taylor. In passing, neither had recognized the other.

On the 18th of May, Gen. Taylor, having obtained pontoons, crossed the Rio Grande unopposed, both above and below Matamoras, and took possession of the city. The request from Gen. Arista, for a suspension of hostilities until the terms of boundary could be amicably arranged by the two Governments, was positively refused. For three months, Gen. Taylor remained at Matamoras. This was with him a period of great anxiety. His victories had excited unbounded enthusiasm, and both govern-

ment and people seemed to expect that he would sweep immediately and resistlessly on to the city of Mexico; but this required a march of more than five hundred miles, intersected by rivers easily defended, and mountain-ranges, in whose narrow defiles a small band could resist a host.

President Polk, in transmitting to Gen. Taylor his commission of major-general by brevet, wrote to him as follows: "It gave me sincere pleasure, immediately upon receipt of official intelligence from the scene of your achievements, to confer upon you, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, this testimonial of the estimate which your Government places upon your skill and gallantry. To yourself, and the brave officers and soldiers under your command, the gratitude of the country is justly due. Our army have fully sustained their deservedly high reputation, and added another bright page to the history of American valor and patriotism. They have won new laurels for themselves and for their country.

"The battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma rank among our most brilliant victories, and will long be remembered by the American people. When all the details of those battles, and of the noble defence of the camp opposite to Matamoras, shall have been received, it will be my pleasure, as it will be my grateful duty, to render to the officers and men under your command suitable testimonials for their conduct in the brilliant victories which a superintending Providence has enabled them to achieve for their country."

It was Gen. Taylor's intention to make Camargo, which was one hundred and forty miles farther up the river, his base of operations in the now contemplated invasion of Mexico. Camargo was nearer to Monterey, his next point of attack. He was, however, delayed for some time by the non-arrival of re-enforcements, and by his want of means of transportation. This delay gave the Mexicans time to recover from their panic, and to make preparations for a vigorous resistance. At length, the latter part of July, the army was put in motion. Sixteen hundred mules had been obtained for the transportation. The country through which they marched had long been infested by banditti; and large numbers of crosses were passed, which had been reared by the friends of murdered travellers at the places where they had been slain. These crosses were of wood, about four feet high; some of recent

construction, and others hoary, and mossy with age. A brief inscription generally told the story. At one place, there was quite a cluster of these crosses, in commemoration of a company of men, women, and children, who, on a pleasure-party to Matamoras, were met by a band of savages, and all slain. Irreverently our troops tore down these crosses, and used them for fire-wood. Camargo was reached without opposition; and here another delay occurred, of six weeks.

Early in September, the troops again took up their line of march for Monterey. In the distance, there rose sublimely before them the majestic peaks of the mountains, "cutting their outlines against the clear sky like huge masses of indigo." It was generally supposed that the Mexicans would not make any stand at Monterey, and Gen. Taylor was of this opinion. Soon, however, the indications began to multiply that there was trouble to be encountered ahead. The Mexican muleteers shrugged their shoulders ominously. At Marin, a very intelligent, honest-looking Mexican was asked if there would be much fighting. "Yes, sir," he replied very decidedly: "there will be much fighting, and many deaths."

When they reached Seralvo, Mexican cavalry began to appear, hovering in front and upon their flanks, watching every movement. At the village of Ramas, quite a skirmish ensued. On the 19th of September, the army reached the outskirts of Monterey, and encamped at the Walnut Springs, three miles distant from the city, which was beautifully situated in the Valley of the San Juan River, and was surrounded by the lofty ridges of the Sierra Madre. Gen. Taylor was so much deceived, that, two days before, he wrote to the War Department, —

"It is even doubtful whether Gen. Ampudia will attempt to hold Monterey. His regular force is small, say three thousand, eked out, perhaps, to six thousand by volunteers, many of them forced."

Instead of this, there was found in Monterey a garrison of ten thousand soldiers, seven thousand of whom were regular troops. Gen. Taylor had under his command six thousand two hundred and twenty.

The next day after our arrival, Sunday the 20th, the enemy's works were carefully reconnoitred. Gen. Worth was then ordered to make a *détour* to the west of the city, and attack in that direction, and carry the works if possible. To aid him in this

endeavor, Gen. Taylor was to make a demonstration on the east. The Mexicans were vigilant, and watched every movement. Promptly they threw out re-enforcements to strengthen their western lines. To divert their attention, Gen. Taylor displayed a large force on the east, and, under cover of the darkness of the night, erected a battery of two twenty-four-pounder howitzers, a ten-inch mortar, and four light field-batteries of four guns each. In the night, Gen. Worth reached the Saltillo Road, and occupied a position just out of the range of the Mexican guns.

Early on the morning of Monday, the 21st, Gen. Taylor received a despatch from Gen. Worth, dated nine o'clock the evening before, announcing the success of his movement, and urging a strong assault, in his support, upon the eastern portion of the town. About ten o'clock, as these troops were approaching the eastern walls, they were opened upon from masked batteries, with such a storm of iron, that they quailed before it. Gens. Taylor and Twiggs were both upon the ground. The troops were thrown into confusion; but the indomitable spirit of Gen. Taylor rallied them, and, by an impetuous charge, they captured one fort and an old fortified block-house. Still the scene of confusion was dreadful. Many lives had been lost. Gen. Taylor was in the midst of the *mêlée*, laboring under the most intense excitement.

As night approached, a little order was evolved from the chaos. Garland's brigade held the captured works, and the rest of the troops were sent back to camp. At sunset, it began to rain. One of the soldiers writes, —

"That was one of the most miserable nights I ever passed. We had had nothing to eat since the evening before. We had been out all night, and had been fighting all day; nor was it until the next afternoon — making in all about forty-eight hours under arms — that we had even a morsel, except some sugar that had been trampled under foot."

The next day, Tuesday, the 22d, the assault was not renewed. Its hours were mainly devoted to the sad duty of taking care of the wounded, and burying the dead. The enemy kept up a vigorous fire upon any of our troops who came within range. Gen. Worth's division, however, upon the other side of the city, after very hard fighting, succeeded in carrying the Bishop's Palace, and turned its guns upon the fugitive garrison. Gen. Taylor, having ascertained the fact of this decisive success, felt confident that the Mexicans could not long hold possession of the town.



During the night, the enemy evacuated nearly all his defences on the eastern part of the city, to strengthen those points now so seriously menaced on the west by Gen. Worth. This was reported early in the morning to Gen. Taylor. He says in his report, —

“I immediately sent instructions to that officer, leaving it to his discretion, to enter the city, covering his men by the houses and walls, and to advance as far as he might deem prudent. After ordering the remainder of the troops as a reserve, under the orders of Gen. Twiggs, I repaired to the abandoned works, and discovered that a portion of Gen. Quitman’s brigade had entered the town, and were successfully working their way towards the principal plaza. I then ordered up the Second Regiment of Texas mounted volunteers, who entered the city, dismounted, and, under the immediate orders of Gen. Henderson, co-operated with Gen. Quitman’s brigade. Capt. Bragg’s battery was also ordered up, and supported by the Third Infantry ; and, after firing for some time at the cathedral, a portion of it was likewise thrown into the city.

“Our troops advanced from house to house, and from square to square, until they reached a street but one square in rear of the principal plaza, in and near which the enemy’s force was mainly concentrated. This advance was conducted vigorously, but with due caution, and, although destructive to the enemy, was attended with but small loss upon our part.”

In the mean time, American batteries were throwing shot and shell into the city, until the fire endangered our own advancing troops. As Quitman’s brigade was exceedingly exhausted, and night was drawing on, Gen. Taylor ordered them to withdraw to the safer position of the evacuated works. This was done slowly, and in good order. At eleven o’clock at night, he received a note from Gen. Worth, stating that he had penetrated the city almost to the central plaza, and that a mortar which had been forwarded to his division in the morning was doing great execution.

Early in the morning of Thursday, the 24th, Gen. Taylor received a despatch from the Mexican general, Ampudia, proposing to evacuate the town. This led to a cessation of fire until twelve o’clock. A personal interview took place between the two generals, Taylor and Ampudia, which resulted in a capitulation. The town and its material of war were placed in possession of the victor. The city was found to be very strongly fortified. Its well-constructed works were armed with forty-two pieces of cannon,

and well supplied with ammunition. Our loss was very severe. Twelve officers and one hundred and eight men were killed. Thirty-one officers and three hundred and thirty-seven men were wounded. The loss of the enemy is not known; but it must have been dreadful, as our balls and shells tore through their streets and dwellings.

An eye-witness thus describes the appearance, as our troops were in the distance storming one of the heights: "Each flash looked like an electric spark. The flashes and the white smoke ascended the hillside as steadily as if worked by machinery. The dark space between the apex of the height and the curling smoke of the musketry grew less and less, until the whole became enveloped in smoke, and we knew that our gallant troops had carried it. It was a glorious sight, and quite warmed our cold and chilled bodies."

Gen. Worth's division had left camp with only two days' rations, and much of this was spoiled by the rain; yet they climbed these cliffs and charged these batteries for forty-eight hours, many of them without any food except raw corn.

Gen. Taylor, consolidating his strength at Monterey, sent out divisions of his army to occupy important posts in the vicinity. Santa Anna was commander-in-chief of the Mexican armies. He collected twenty thousand men at San Luis Potosi, a city of four thousand inhabitants, about two hundred and fifty miles south of Monterey. Gen. Scott was placed in command of all the land-forces in Mexico. As he was preparing to advance upon the city of Mexico by the way of Vera Cruz, nearly all of Gen. Taylor's forces were withdrawn from him. For five months, Gen. Taylor remained in Monterey, with merely sufficient men to garrison his defensive works; but in February, having received re-enforcements which raised his army to six thousand men, he commenced a forward movement. When about fifty miles south of Monterey, he learned that Santa Anna was rapidly advancing upon him with twenty thousand men. To meet such a force with but five thousand, it was necessary that Gen. Taylor should have every possible advantage of position. He found a field such as he desired, on a plateau, a short distance from the small hamlet of Buena Vista. Having posted his little band to the best possible advantage, Gen. Taylor, with his staff, stood upon an eminence at a little distance, from which he could see the clouds of dust raised by the

immense host advancing against him. Onward the vast throng pressed, in numbers which seemed almost countless, until the band of Americans was nearly surrounded. Anxiously his staff looked into the general's face ; but no sign of faltering or agitation could be perceived.

Just then, a Mexican messenger was seen nearing the outposts with a flag of truce. It was a summons to surrender, with the assurance that twenty thousand Mexicans were in Gen. Taylor's front and rear.

"Were they twice that number," Gen. Taylor quietly remarked to the officers around him, "it would make no difference."

He then returned the modest answer to Santa Anna, "Gen. Taylor never surrenders." As he rode along his ranks, he said to his troops, "Soldiers, I intend to stand here not only so long as a man remains, but so long as a *piece* of a man is left." It was the 22d of February, 1847. The battle soon commenced, — a battle of ten hours' duration. In the midst of one of its most terrible scenes of tumult and carnage, Gen. Taylor rode up to a battery which was dealing destruction in the ranks of the foe, and, in tones as calm as if he were sitting by his camp-fire, said, "A little more grape, Capt. Bragg." At the close of the day, over seven hundred of the Americans had been stricken down in killed and wounded, and about two thousand of the Mexicans. Often, during the eventful day, the result of the conflict was extremely doubtful; and, when night closed the scene, it seemed probable, in the American camp, that the dreadful struggle would be renewed on the morrow. The day of the battle was wet and raw. Our exhausted troops, drenched and chilled, bivouacked without fires. It was an anxious night ; but in the morning, to their unspeakable relief, they found that the Mexicans had fled. This ended Gen. Taylor's active participation in the Mexican War.

Seldom has a battle been fought in which the troops displayed more gallant conduct than was exhibited by Gen. Taylor's army at the battle of Buena Vista. All of the troops were volunteers, with the exception of about five hundred. But few of them had been with Taylor in his previous victories, and many of them had never been in battle. It is universally admitted that the victory was owing, not merely to the courage and patient endurance of the troops, but also to the military skill of their commander. Three several times during the day, the battle, on our part, seemed

hopelessly lost. The Mexicans were so superior in numbers, that they could easily concentrate an overpowering force at any point. With most painful interest, Gen. Taylor watched the movements in various parts of the field, as he despatched re-enforcements, now in one direction and now in another, to strengthen his exhausted and wavering lines.

At one time, the Second Kentucky Regiment was despatched to the aid of a column, which was slowly giving way before the tremendous pressure of the foe. In hurrying to their relief, the regiment was compelled to pass through a ravine filled with gullies and obstructions. In their eagerness in pressing forward, and surmounting these difficulties, they, of course, became broken, and presented an aspect of confusion and disorder. Gen. Taylor, who was eagerly watching them in the distance, was bitterly disappointed at this apparent failure of troops upon whom he had placed great reliance. Turning sadly to Mr. Crittenden, who stood near, he said,—

“This will not do. This is not the way for Kentuckians to behave themselves.”

Mr. Crittenden was also so mortified, and felt so deeply for the honor of his native State, that, for a few moments, he could make no reply. But soon the Kentuckians had crossed the rugged chasm, and were seen ascending the slope to the higher land beyond, shoulder to shoulder, like the veterans of a hundred battles. The general could scarcely restrain his expressions of delight, as they moved rapidly on until they reached the crest of the hill. Here they encountered a large body of the Mexicans, rushing onward with shouts of exultation. The Kentuckians levelled their pieces, and poured in their volleys of bullets again and again, with such regularity, precision, and rapidity of fire, that the Mexicans recoiled, staggered, and fled, leaving the ground covered with their dead.

The general, with a throbbing heart and a moistened eye, but in perfect silence, watched this movement so heroic, and its results so decisive. His face was flushed with excitement, and beamed with delight. But when the distant report of the volleys reached his ear, and he saw the Mexicans in wild flight, scattered over the plain, he could no longer restrain his admiration, but shouted, “Hurrah for old Kentucky!”

A distinguished officer in the army thus describes the appearance of the general toward the close of the conflict:—



"At a time when the fortunes of the day seemed extremely problematical, when many on our side even despaired of success, old Rough and Ready, as he is not inaptly styled (whom you must know, by the by, is short, fat, and dumpy in person, with remarkably short legs), took his position on a commanding height overlooking the two armies. This was 'about three, or perhaps four o'clock in the afternoon. The enemy, who had succeeded in gaining an advantageous position, made a fierce charge upon our column, and fought with a desperation that seemed, for a time, to insure success to their arms. The struggle lasted for some time. All the while, Gen. Taylor was a silent spectator; his countenance exhibiting the most anxious solicitude, alternating between hope and despondency. His staff, perceiving his perilous situation,—for he was exposed to the fire of the enemy,—approached him, and implored him to retire. He heeded them not. His thoughts were intent upon victory or defeat. He knew not at this moment what the result would be. He felt that that engagement was to decide his fate. He had given all his orders, and selected his position. If the day went against him, he was irretrievably lost; if for him, he could rejoice, in common with his countrymen, at the triumphant success of our arms.

"Such seemed to be his thoughts, his determination; and when he saw the enemy give way, and retreat in the utmost confusion, he gave free vent to his pent-up feelings. His right leg was quickly disengaged from the pommel of the saddle, where it had remained during the whole of the fierce encounter; his arms, which were calmly folded over his breast, relaxed their hold; his feet fairly danced in the stirrups; and his whole body was in motion. It was a moment of the most exciting and intense interest. His face was suffused with tears. The day was won; the victory complete; his little army saved from defeat and disgrace; and he could not refrain from weeping for joy at what had seemed to so many, but a moment before, as an impossible result."

The tidings of the brilliant victory of Buena Vista spread the wildest enthusiasm over the country. The name of Gen. Taylor was on every one's lips. The Whig party decided to take advantage of this wonderful popularity in bringing forward the unpolished, unlettered, honest soldier as their candidate for the presidency. Gen. Taylor was astonished at the announcement, and for a time would not listen to it; declaring that he was not at all quali-

fied for such an office. So little interest had he taken in politics, that, for forty years, he had not cast a vote. It was not without chagrin that several distinguished statesmen who had been long years in the public service found their claims set aside in behalf of one whose name had never been heard of, save in connection with Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista. It is said that Daniel Webster, in his haste, remarked, "It is a nomination not fit to be made."

Gen. Taylor was not an eloquent speaker or a fine writer. His friends took possession of him, and prepared such few communications as it was needful should be presented to the public. The popularity of the successful warrior swept the land. He was triumphantly elected over two opposing candidates, — Gen. Cass, and the Ex-President, Martin Van Buren. Though he selected an excellent cabinet, the good old man found himself in a very uncongenial position, and was, at times, sorely perplexed and harassed. His mental sufferings were very severe, and probably tended to hasten his death. The proslavery party was pushing its claims with tireless energy; expeditions were fitting out to capture Cuba; California was pleading for admission to the Union, while slavery stood at the door to bar her out. Gen. Taylor found the political conflicts in Washington to be far more trying to the nerves than battles with Mexicans or Indians.

In the midst of all these troubles, Gen. Taylor, after he had occupied the presidential chair but little over a year, took cold, and, after a brief sickness of but five days, died on the 9th of July, 1850. His last words were, "I am not afraid to die. I am ready. I have endeavored to do my duty." He died universally respected and beloved. An honest, unpretending man, he had been steadily growing in the affections of the people; and the nation bitterly lamented his death. All assented to the general truthfulness of the following eulogy, pronounced by the Hon. Mr. Marshall: —

"Great, without pride; cautious, without fear; brave, without rashness; stern, without harshness; modest, without bashfulness; apt, without flippancy; sagacious, without cunning; benevolent, without ostentation; sincere and honest as the sun, — the noble old Roman has, at last, laid down his earthly harness: his task is done."

Gen. Scott, who was thoroughly acquainted with Gen. Taylor,

gives the following graphic and truthful description of his character:—

“With a good store of common sense, Gen. Taylor’s mind had not been enlarged and refreshed by reading, or much converse with the world. Rigidity of ideas was the consequence. The frontiers and small military posts had been his home. Hence he was quite ignorant for his rank, and quite bigoted in his ignorance. His simplicity was child-like, and with innumerable prejudices, amusing and incorrigible, well suited to the tender age. Thus, if a man, however respectable, chanced to wear a coat of an unusual color, or his hat a little on one side of the head; or an officer to leave a corner of his handkerchief dangling from an outside pocket, — in any such case, this critic held the offender to be a coxcomb (perhaps something worse), whom he would not, to use his oft-repeated phrase, ‘touch with a pair of tongs.’

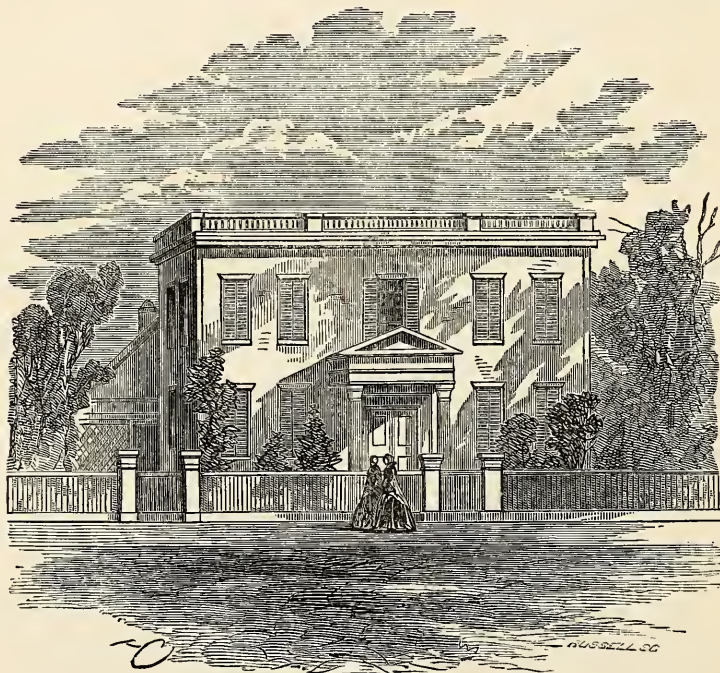
“Any allusion to literature beyond good old Dilworth’s Spelling-book, on the part of one wearing a sword, was evidence, with the same judge, of utter unfitness for heavy marchings and combats. In short, few men have ever had a more comfortable, labor-saving contempt for learning of every kind. Yet this old soldier and neophyte statesman had the true basis of a great character, — pure, uncorrupted morals, combined with indomitable courage. Kind-hearted, sincere, and hospitable in a plain way, he had no vice but prejudice, many friends, and left behind him not an enemy in the world.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MILLARD FILLMORE.

His lowly Birth. — Struggles with Adversity. — Limited Education. — Eagerness for Intellectual Improvement. — A Clothier. — A Law-student. — Commencement of Practice. — Rapid Rise. — Political Life. — In Congress. — Vice-President. — President. — His Administration. — Retirement. — The Civil War.

MILLARD FILLMORE, the thirteenth President of the United States, was born at Summer Hill, Cayuga County, N.Y., on



RESIDENCE OF MILLARD FILLMORE.

the 7th of January, 1800. His father was a farmer, and, owing to misfortune, in humble circumstances. Of his mother, the daughter of Dr. Abiathar Millard of Pittsfield, Mass., it has been said that she possessed an intellect of very high order, united with



much personal loveliness, sweetness of disposition, graceful manners, and exquisite sensibilities. She died in 1831; having lived to see her son a young man of distinguished promise, though she was not permitted to witness the high dignity which he finally attained.

In consequence of the secluded home and limited means of his father, Millard enjoyed but slender advantages for education in his early years. The common schools, which he occasionally attended, were very imperfect institutions; and books were scarce and expensive. There was nothing then in his character to indicate the brilliant career upon which he was about to enter. He was a plain farmer's boy; intelligent, good-looking, kind-hearted. The sacred influences of home had taught him to revere the Bible, and had laid the foundations of an upright character. When fourteen years of age, his father sent him some hundred miles from home, to the then wilds of Livingston County, to learn the trade of a clothier. Near the mill there was a small village, where some enterprising man had commenced the collection of a village library. This proved an inestimable blessing to young Fillmore. His evenings were spent in reading. Soon every leisure moment was occupied with books. His thirst for knowledge became insatiate; and the selections which he made were continually more elevating and instructive. He read history, biography, oratory; and thus gradually there was enkindling in his heart a desire to be something more than a mere worker with his hands; and he was becoming, almost unknown to himself, a well-informed, educated man.

This intellectual culture of necessity pervaded his whole being. It beamed forth from his countenance; it inspired his words; it placed its impress of dignity and refinement upon his manners. The young clothier had now attained the age of nineteen years, and was of fine personal appearance and of gentlemanly demeanor. It so happened that there was a gentleman in the neighborhood of ample pecuniary means and of benevolence, — Judge Walter Wood, — who was struck with the prepossessing appearance of young Fillmore. He made his acquaintance, and was so much impressed with his ability and attainments, that he advised him to abandon his trade, and devote himself to the study of the law. The young man replied, that he had no means of his own, no friends to help him, and that his previous education had been very imperfect. But

Judge Wood had so much confidence in him, that he kindly offered to take him into his own office, and to loan him such money as he needed. Most gratefully, the generous offer was accepted.

There is in many minds a strange delusion about a collegiate education. A young man is supposed to be liberally educated if he has graduated at some college. But many a boy loiters through university halls, and then enters a law-office, who is by no means as well prepared to prosecute his legal studies as was Millard Fillmore when he graduated at the clothing-mill at the end of four years of manual labor, during which every leisure moment had been devoted to intense mental culture.

Young Fillmore was now established in the law-office. The purity of his character, the ardor of his zeal, his physical health, and his native abilities, all combined to bear him triumphantly forward in his studies. That he might not be burdened with debt, and that he might not bear too heavily on the generosity of his benefactor, he, during the winter months, taught school, and, in various other ways, helped himself along. After spending two years in this retired country village, he went to the city of Buffalo, and entered a law-office there, where he could enjoy the highest advantages. Here, for two years more, he pressed onward in his studies with untiring zeal; at the same time, supporting himself mainly by teaching.

In 1823, when twenty-three years of age, he was admitted to the Court of Common Pleas. He then went to the beautiful little village of Aurora, situated on the eastern banks of Cayuga Lake, and commenced the practice of the law. In this secluded, peaceful region, his practice, of course, was limited, and there was no opportunity for a sudden rise in fortune or in fame. Here, in the year 1826, he married a lady of great moral worth, and one capable of adorning any station she might be called to fill, — Miss Abigail Powers, daughter of Rev. Lemuel Powers. In this quiet home of rural peace and loveliness, Mr. Fillmore continued to devote himself to juridical studies, and to the fundamental principles of law, as if he had been conscious of the exalted destiny which was before him. Probably no portion of his life was more happy than these serene, untroubled hours.

But true merit cannot long be concealed. His elevation of character, his untiring industry, his legal acquirements, and his skill as an advocate, gradually attracted attention; and he was in-

vited to enter into partnership, under highly advantageous circumstances, with an elder member of the bar in Buffalo. Just before removing to Buffalo, in 1829, he took his seat in the House of Assembly of the State of New York, as representative from Erie County. Though he had never taken a very active part in politics, his vote and his sympathies were with the Whig party. The State was then Democratic, and he found himself in a helpless minority in the Legislature: still the testimony comes from all parties, that his courtesy, ability, and integrity, won, to a very unusual degree, the respect of his associates. To the important bill for abolishing imprisonment for debt he gave his earnest and eloquent co-operation, speaking upon the subject with convincing power.

The State Legislature is not unfrequently the entrance-door to the National Congress. After discharging, with great acceptance to his Whig constituents, his responsibilities in the House of Assembly for three years, he was, in the autumn of 1832, elected to a seat in the United-States Congress. He entered that troubled arena in some of the most tumultuous hours of our national history. The great conflict respecting the National Bank, and the removal of the deposits, was then raging. Experienced leaders, veterans in Congressional battles, led the contending hosts. There was but little opportunity for a new-comer to distinguish himself. In this battle of the giants, Mr. Fillmore could do but little more than look on, study the scene, garner wisdom, watch his opportunity, and cast his silent vote.

His term of two years closed; and he returned to his profession, which he pursued with increasing reputation and success. After the lapse of two years, he again became a candidate for Congress; was re-elected, and took his seat in 1837. His past experience as a representative gave him strength and confidence. The first term of service in Congress to any man can be but little more than an introduction. He was now prepared for active duty. All his energies were brought to bear upon the public good. Every measure received his impress. The industry and the intensity with which he applied himself to his Congressional duties were characteristic of the man, and have, perhaps, never been surpassed.

His reputation now began to be national. The labors which devolved upon him were more arduous than can well be conceived

of by one who has not been in the same situation. To draught resolutions in the committee-room, and then to defend them against the most skilful opponents on the floor of the House, requires readiness of mind, mental resources, and skill in debate, such as few possess. Weary with these exhausting labors, and pressed by the claims of his private affairs, Mr. Fillmore, just before the close of the session, wrote a letter to his constituents, declining to be a candidate for re-election. Notwithstanding this communication, his friends met in convention, and unanimously, and by acclamation, renominated him, with the most earnest expression of their desire that he would comply with their wishes. Though greatly gratified by this proof of their appreciation of his labors, he adhered to his resolve; and, at the close of the term for which he was elected, he returned to his home, rejoicing at his release from the agitating cares of official life.

Mr. Fillmore was now a man of wide repute, and his popularity filled the State. The lines between the two parties, the Whig and Democratic, were strongly drawn; and the issues involved excited the community to the highest degree. The Whig party brought forward Mr. Fillmore as the strongest candidate whom they could present for the office of governor. The canvass was one of the most exciting which had ever agitated the State, and the Whig party was signally defeated. In the year 1847, he was elected, by a very great majority, to the very important office of comptroller of the State. Many who were not with him in political principles gave him their vote, from their conviction of his eminent fitness for that office.

In entering upon the responsible duties which this situation demanded, it was necessary for him to abandon his profession, and, sundering those social ties which bound him to his numerous friends in Buffalo, to remove to the city of Albany. It was universally admitted that the duties of this office were never more faithfully discharged.

Mr. Fillmore had attained the age of forty-seven years. His labors at the bar, in the Legislature, in Congress, and as comptroller, had given him very considerable fame. The Whigs were casting about to find suitable candidates for President and Vice-President at the approaching election. Far away, on the waters of the Rio Grande, there was a rough old soldier, who had fought one or two successful battles with the Mexicans, which had

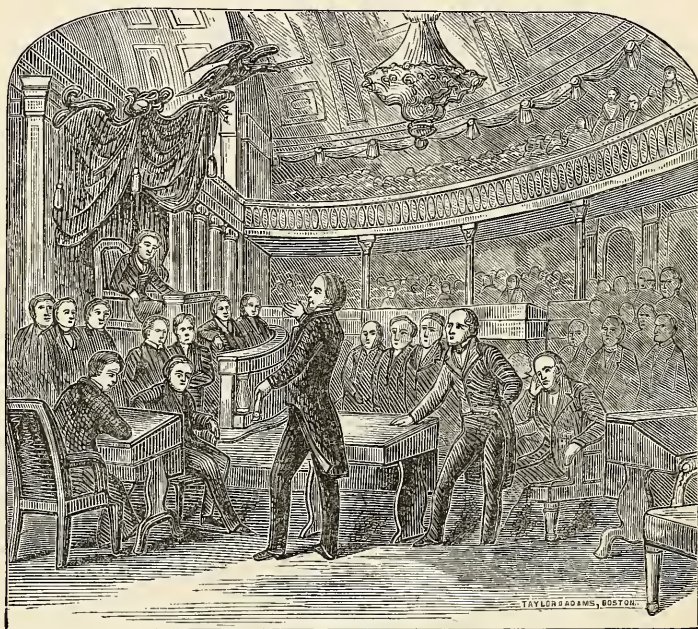


caused his name to be proclaimed in trumpet-tones all over the land. He was an unpolished, unlettered man, entirely inexperienced in all statesmanlike accomplishments ; but he was a man of firmness, of uncompromising integrity, and of sound common sense and practical wisdom. He was an available man ; for "Palo Alto" and "Resaca de la Palma" would ring pleasantly upon the popular ear, and catch the popular vote. But it was necessary to associate with him on the same ticket some man of reputation as a statesman, and in whose intellectual powers and varied experience the community might repose confidence.

Under the influence of these considerations, the names of Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore became the rallying-cry of the Whigs as their candidates for President and Vice-President. The Whig ticket was signally triumphant. On the 4th of March, 1849, Gen. Taylor was inaugurated President, and Millard Fillmore Vice-President, of the United States. He was admirably adapted for this position. His tall, well-proportioned, manly form, and the natural dignity and grace of his bearing, gave him an imposing presence. His mind, originally of a high order, and disciplined by the laborious culture of years, enabled him promptly and successfully to meet every intellectual emergency. His countenance gave expression to those traits of firmness, gentleness, and conscientiousness, which marked his character.

The stormy days of the Republic were now at hand. The great question of slavery was permeating every subject which was brought before Congress, shaping the whole legislation of the country, arousing fiery debate, arraying parties in hostile lines in the Senate and in the House, and agitating as with earthquake-throes every city and village in the Union. It was evident that the strength of our institutions was soon to be severely tried. John C. Calhoun, when President of the Senate, had taken the position, that he had no power to call a senator to order for words, however intemperate, when spoken in debate. Vice-President Fillmore, upon taking his chair as presiding officer over that august body, announced to the Senate his determination to maintain decorum in that chamber, and that he should promptly call senators to order for any offensive words which might be spoken. The Senate manifested its approval of this decision by unanimously ordering the views thus expressed to be entered upon their journal.

On the 9th of July, 1850, President Taylor, but about one year and four months after his inauguration, was suddenly taken sick, and died. By the Constitution, Vice-President Fillmore thus became President of the United States. He appointed a very able cabinet, of which the illustrious Daniel Webster was Secretary of State. The agitated condition of the country brought questions of very great delicacy before him. He was bound by his oath of office to execute the laws of the United States. One of those laws was understood to be, that if a slave, escaping from



THE UNITED-STATES SENATE.

bondage, should reach a free State, the United States was bound to help catch him, and return him to his master. Most Christian men loathed this law. President Fillmore felt bound by his oath rigidly to see it enforced. Slavery was organizing armies to invade Cuba, as it had invaded Texas, and annex it to the United States. President Fillmore gave all the influence of his exalted station against the atrocious enterprise. The illustrious Hungarian, Kossuth, visited our shores, and was cordially received by the President; while he frankly informed him that it

was the policy of our Government to avoid all complications in European affairs.

Mr. Fillmore had very serious difficulties to contend with, since the opposition had a majority in both Houses. He did every thing in his power to conciliate the South; but the proslavery party in the South felt the inadequacy of all measures of transient conciliation. The population of the free States was so rapidly increasing over that of the slave States, that it was inevitable that the power of the Government should soon pass into the hands of the free States. The famous compromise-measures were adopted under Mr. Fillmore's administration, and the Japan Expedition was sent out.

On the 4th of March, 1853, Mr. Fillmore, having served one term, retired from office. He then took a long tour throughout the South, where he met with quite an enthusiastic reception. In a speech at Vicksburg, alluding to the rapid growth of the country, he said, —

"Canada is knocking for admission, and Mexico would be glad to come in; and, without saying whether it would be right or wrong, we stand with open arms to receive them: for it is the manifest destiny of this Government to embrace the whole North-American continent."

In 1855, President Fillmore went to Europe, where he was received with those marked attentions which his position and character merited. Returning to this country in 1856, he was nominated for the presidency by the strangely called "Know-Nothing" party. Mr. Buchanan, the Democratic candidate, was the successful competitor for the prize. Since then, Mr. Fillmore has lived in retirement. During the terrible conflict of civil war, he was mostly silent. It was generally supposed that his sympathies were rather with those who were endeavoring to overthrow our institutions. Edward Everett, who had been a candidate for the vice-presidency, left no one in doubt respecting his abhorrence of the Rebellion, and his devotion to his country's flag. President Fillmore kept aloof from the conflict, without any cordial words of cheer to the one party or the other. He was thus forgotten by both. He is still living in the interior of New York, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### FRANKLIN PIERCE.

Character of his Father. — His Promise in Boyhood. — College Life. — Political Views. — Success as a Lawyer — Entrance upon Public Life. — Service in the Mexican War. — Landing in Mexico. — March through the Country. — Incidents of the March. — Anecdotes. — Nomination for the Presidency. — Election. — Administration. — Retirement.

FRANKLIN PIERCE, the fourteenth President of the United States, was born in Hillsborough, N.H., Nov. 23, 1804. His



RESIDENCE OF FRANKLIN PIERCE.

father was a Revolutionary soldier, who, with his own strong arm, hewed him out a home in the wilderness. He was a man of inflexible integrity; of strong, though uncultivated mind; and an uncompromising Democrat. When, under the administration of



John Adams, an effort was made to draw our country into an alliance with England in her war against the French republic, Major Pierce, as his title then was, was offered a high commission in the army which was proposed to be levied.

"No, gentlemen," was his reply. "Poor as I am, and acceptable as would be the position under other circumstances, I would sooner go to yonder mountains, dig me a cave, and live on roast potatoes, than be instrumental in promoting the objects for which that army is raised."

His energetic and upright character and commanding abilities gave him great influence in the secluded region where he dwelt, and he occupied nearly every post of honor and emolument which his neighbors could confer upon him. He was for several years in the State Legislature; was a member of the governor's council, and a general of the militia. He was an independent farmer; a generous, large-hearted, hospitable man. The mother of Franklin Pierce was all that a son could desire,—an intelligent, prudent, affectionate, Christian woman. Franklin was the sixth of eight children.

Old Gen. Pierce was a politician, ever ready for argument; and there was ample opportunity for the exercise of his powers in those days of intense political excitement, when, all over the New-England States, Federalists and Democrats were arrayed so fiercely against each other. Franklin, as a boy, listened eagerly to the arguments of his father, enforced by strong and ready utterance and earnest gestures. It was in this school that he was led to ally himself with the Democratic party so closely, as to be ready to follow wherever it might lead.

Franklin was a very bright and handsome boy, generous, warm-hearted, and brave. He won alike the love of old and young. The boys on the play-ground loved him. His teachers loved him. The neighbors looked upon him with pride and affection. He was by instinct a gentleman; always speaking kind words, doing kind deeds, with a peculiar unstudied tact which taught him what was agreeable. Without developing any precocity of genius, or any unnatural devotion to books, he was a good scholar; in body, in mind, in affections, a finely-developed boy.

When sixteen years of age, in the year 1820, he entered Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Me. The writer there became personally acquainted with him. He was one of the most popular

young men in college. The purity of his moral character, the unvarying courtesy of his demeanor, his rank as a scholar, and his genial nature, rendered him a universal favorite. There was something very peculiarly winning in his address, and it was evidently not in the slightest degree studied: it was the simple outgushing of his own magnanimous and loving nature.

Upon graduating, in the year 1824, Franklin Pierce commenced the study of law in the office of Judge Woodbury, one of the most distinguished lawyers of the State, and a man of great private worth. The eminent social qualities of the young lawyer, his father's prominence as a public man, and the brilliant political career into which Judge Woodbury was entering, all tended to entice Mr. Pierce into the fascinating yet perilous paths of political life. With all the ardor of his nature, he espoused the cause of Gen. Jackson for the presidency. He commenced the practice of law in Hillsborough, and was soon elected to represent the town in the State Legislature. Here he served for four years. The two last years he was chosen speaker of the house by a very large vote.

In 1833, at the age of twenty-nine, he was elected a member of Congress. Without taking an active part in the debates, he was faithful and laborious in duty, and ever rising in the estimation of those with whom he was associated. Strenuously he supported the administration of Gen. Jackson, securing not only the confidence, but the personal friendship, of that extraordinary man. Mr. Pierce sympathized in the fears of the State-rights party, that the National Government would consolidate so much power as to endanger the liberties of the individual States. In Congress, he warmly allied himself with the Democratic party; being apparently in sympathy with them in all its measures.

In 1837, being then but thirty-three years of age, he was elected to the Senate of the United States; taking his seat just as Mr. Van Buren commenced his administration. He was the youngest member in the Senate. The ablest men our country has produced were then among the leaders of the Democracy, — Calhoun, Buchanan, Benton. Senator Pierce was a remarkably fluent, graceful speaker, always courteous and good-tempered; and his speeches were listened to by both parties with interest. In the year 1834, he married Miss Jane Means Appleton, a lady of rare beauty and accomplishments, and one admirably fitted to adorn every station

with which her husband was honored. Of three sons who were born to them, all now sleep with their mother in the grave.

In the year 1838, Mr. Pierce, with growing fame, and increasing business as a lawyer, took up his residence in Concord, the capital of New Hampshire. The citizens of his native town, in token of their high esteem, gave him a parting dinner. He devoted himself with new zeal to his duties at the bar, and took his rank at once among the ablest lawyers. His tact, his genial spirit, and his unvarying courtesy, gave him extraordinary power with a jury. It is said that he was never known to insult, browbeat, or endeavor to terrify, a witness.



GEN. PIERCE LANDING IN MEXICO.

President Polk, upon his accession to office, appointed Mr. Pierce attorney-general of the United States; but the offer was declined, in consequence of numerous professional engagements at home, and the precarious state of Mrs. Pierce's health. He also, about the same time, declined the nomination for governor by the Democratic party. The war with Mexico called Mr. Pierce into the army. Receiving the appointment of brigadier-

general, he embarked, with a portion of his troops, at Newport, R.I., on the 27th of May, 1847.

Gen. Pierce landed upon a sand-beach, at a place called Virgara, on the 28th of June. There was already an encampment of about five hundred men, under the command of Major Lally, at that place. He was ordered to make no delay there, and yet no preparations had been made for his departure. About two thousand wild mules had been collected from the prairies; but a stampede had taken place, in which fifteen hundred had disappeared. He was compelled to remain for several weeks in this encampment, upon sand as smooth as a floor, and so hard, that it would scarcely show the footprints of a mule. For three miles, the waves dashed magnificently on this extensive beach. Though the mornings were close, and the heat excessive, by eleven o'clock a fine sea-breeze always set in. There were frequent tropical showers, in which the rain fell in floods; and there were peals of thunder such as are rarely heard, and flashes of lightning, such as are, perhaps, never seen, in regions farther north.

Every morning, the troops were under drill: they could not bear the exposure to the mid-day sun. Though they were not far from the city, Gen. Pierce preferred to dwell in his tent upon the beach, rather than to occupy any of the houses. Vigorous measures were adopted to collect mules and mustangs, in preparation for their advance. These animals were generally caught wild upon the prairies, unaccustomed to the harness, and even to the bridle. Much labor was required in taming them, and in breaking them to harness. The troops were kept constantly on the alert, in anticipation of an attack from the Mexicans.

At ten o'clock in the evening of the 7th of July, there was an alarm. Musketry-firing was heard in the direction of the advanced pickets. The long-roll was beaten, and the whole command was instantly formed in line of battle. It proved to be a false alarm, or rather was caused by the approach of a small band of guerillas to the vicinity of the sentinels. The next day, July 9, Lieut. Whipple was lured by curiosity to visit the cemetery, near the walls of the city. Imprudently, he went unarmed, and accompanied but by a single private. Six guerillas attacked, overpowered, and seized him; while the private escaped, and informed Gen. Pierce. He immediately despatched a troop of cavalry in pursuit; but no trace of Lieut. Whipple could be dis-



covered. In a few days, however, they learned that his life had been spared, but that he was a prisoner about twelve miles from the camp. A detachment was sent by night to surprise the banditti. They took the village; but the guerillas fled, taking their prisoner with them.

At length, on the 13th of July, after a delay of nearly three weeks, and after great labor and perplexity, Gen. Pierce was able to give orders for an advance. The beautiful beach was covered with wagons, mules, horses, and all the imposing paraphernalia of war.

On the morning of the 14th, eighty wagons started, under Capt. Wood. They took the Jalapa Road for San Juan, twelve miles distant. There they were to await the remainder of the brigade. The heat was so intense, that they could not move between the hours of nine in the morning and four in the afternoon. Col. Ransom accompanied the train with two companies of infantry. Every thing being ready, they moved at an early hour, in fine order and spirits. The next day, a detachment of six companies was sent off. It was not until the 16th that Gen. Pierce was able to leave. In his journal he writes, —

“After much perplexity and delay, on account of the unbroken and intractable teams, I left the camp this afternoon at five o’clock, with the Fourth Artillery, Watson’s marine corps, a detachment of the third dragoons, and about forty wagons. The road was very heavy, the wheels were sinking almost to the hubs in sand, and the untried and untamed teams almost constantly bolting in some part of the train. We were occupied rather in breaking the animals to harness than in performing a march. At ten o’clock at night, we bivouacked in the darkness and sand by the wagons in the road, having made but three miles from camp.”

The next morning, at four o’clock, they were again on the move. The road was still heavy with sand, leading over short, steep hills. At eight o’clock in the morning, they reached Santa Fé, but eight miles from Vera Cruz. The heat of a blazing, torrid sun was now overpowering; and the army remained in camp until four o’clock in the afternoon. Just before starting, two muleteers came in, greatly agitated, bringing the report that five hundred guerillas, armed to the teeth, were on the Jalapa Road, rushing on to attack the camp. The whole force was immediately called to arms, and two pieces of artillery placed in position to command the road. It

either proved a false alarm, or the guerillas, taking counsel of discretion, changed their course.

Resuming their march at four o'clock, the column reached San Juan about nine o'clock in the evening, in a drenching rain. The guerillas had attempted to retard the march by destroying a bridge over one of the branches of the San-Juan River; but the New-England men, accustomed to every variety of work, almost without delay repaired the structure. All night, all the next day, and the next night, the rain poured in such floods as are nowhere seen, save in the tropics. The encampment was on low ground, along the margin of the stream. As there was nothing but mud and water to rest in, it was thought best to continue the march.

On the 20th, they reached Telema Nueva, twenty-four miles from Vera Cruz. As they were marching along, several musket-shots were fired upon them from an eminence on their left. A few round-shot were thrown in that direction, and a small detachment dashed up the hill; but the enemy had fled. After advancing about a mile farther, quite a number of mounted Mexicans were seen hovering about, evidently reconnoitring parties. As it was supposed that a large force was in the vicinity, all precautionary arrangements were made to repel an attack. Three companies of infantry, and a detachment of dragoons, were sent to flank our march by advances through a path on the left of the main road. Just as this detachment was returning by the circuitous route to the road along which the main body was passing, the enemy opened a brisk fire upon them.

The foe was in ambush, concealed in the dense chaparral on each side of the road. Our troops met this attack from unseen assailants, and promptly returned the fire. The guns were speedily unlimbered, and a few discharges of canister silenced the fire of the enemy. They fled too rapidly to be caught. We lost six wounded, and seven horses shot. A Mexican paper stated their loss at forty.

"I witnessed," writes Gen. Pierce, "with pleasure, the conduct of that part of my command immediately engaged on this occasion. The first fire of the enemy indicated a pretty formidable force, the precise strength of which could not be ascertained, as they were completely covered by the chaparral. It was the first time on the march that any portion of my command had been fairly under fire. I was at the head of the column, on the main road,

and witnessed the whole scene. I saw nothing but coolness and courage on the part of both officers and men."

On the night of the 20th of July, the brigade encamped at Paso de Orejas. The rear-guard did not reach the encampment until after dark. As it was descending a slope towards the camp, a band of guerillas was seen approaching. All the day they had been noticed on the distant hills, watching the advance of our lines. As they approached menacingly within cannon-range, a gun was brought to bear upon them; and a few discharges put them to flight. Paso de Orejas is on the west side of a beautiful stream, spanned by a substantial bridge.

At four o'clock on the morning of July 21, they again broke camp, and pursued their course towards Puente Nacional, anticipating an attack at every exposed point. When they reached the summit of a long hill which descended on the west to the Antigua River, Gen. Pierce halted his command, and with his glass carefully examined the country before them. In the distance could be seen the little village of Puente Nacional, on the western side of the river. This stream is also crossed by a bridge. A few lancers could be seen in the village, in their gay uniforms, riding rapidly from one position to another, and flourishing their red flags as if in defiance. A strong barricade, defended by a breastwork, was thrown across the bridge. A large body of the enemy was posted on a bluff one hundred and fifty feet high, which commanded the structure over which the little army must pass. It was impossible to turn their position.

Gen. Pierce rode forward to reconnoitre the enemy's works more closely. He then brought forward his artillery, and, by some deadly discharges, swept the bridge, and dispersed the lancers. A few shots were also thrown at the heights, which so distracted the attention of the enemy, that Col. Bonham, with a few companies of picked men, made a rush upon the bridge with a loud battle-cry, leaped the barricade of brush and timber, reached the village, rallied his men under cover of its buildings, and rushed up the steep bluff, to gain its summit just in time to see the bewildered and disorganized foe disappear in the distance. One grand cheer from the victors on the bluff, echoed back by the troops below, greeted this heroic achievement. The remainder of the command followed rapidly, and in good order. A company of dragoons dashed through the village, hoping to cut off the

retreat of the fugitives ; but terror had added such wings to their flight, that they had entirely disappeared in the dense chaparral in their rear.

Col. Bonham's horse was shot, and Gen. Pierce received a musket-ball through the rim of his hat. It is indeed wonderful that so few were hurt, when the bullets, for a short time, rattled so thickly around them ; but the Mexicans on the bluff took poor aim, and most of their balls passed over our heads. Here they encamped for the night, at a distance of thirty miles from Vera Cruz. Gen. Pierce established his headquarters at a large and splendid estate which he found here, belonging to Gen. Santa Anna.

At four o'clock the next morning, July 22, the brigade was again in motion. As they moved along, upon all the surrounding heights armed bands of Mexicans were seen watching them. They kept, however, at too great a distance to be reached by bullet or ball. At one point of the march, the head of the column was fired upon by a few guerillas hidden in the chaparral, who succeeded in wounding three horses ; but the skirmishers thrown out in pursuit of them could find no trace even of their ambuscade. At length, on this day's tramp, they came in sight of an old Spanish fort, which commanded both the road, and a bridge that crossed a stream at this point. The bridge was barricaded, with the evident intention of defending it. Here Gen. Pierce expected a stern conflict ; but, to his surprise, he found both fort and barricade silent and solitary. Removing the obstructions, they came to another stream, much broader, also spanned by a bridge.

"It was," writes Gen. Pierce, "a magnificent work of art, combining great strength and beauty, — a work of the old Spaniards (so many of which are found upon this great avenue from the coast), fitted to awaken the admiration and wonder of the traveller. The fact that the main arch, a span of about sixty feet, had been blown up, first burst upon me as I stood upon the brink of the chasm, with a perpendicular descent of nearly a hundred feet to the bed of a rapid stream much swollen by the recent rains. As far as the eye could reach, above and below, the banks on the west side, of vast height, descended precipitously, almost in a perpendicular line, to the water's edge.

"This sudden and unexpected barrier, I need not say, was somewhat withering to the confidence with which I had been ani-



mated. The news having extended back along the line, my officers soon crowded around me; and the deep silence that ensued was more significant than any thing which could have been spoken. After a few moments' pause, this silence was broken by many short epigrammatical remarks, and more questions. 'We have it before us now,' said Col. Hebert. 'The destruction of this magnificent and expensive work of a past generation could not have been ordered but upon a deliberate and firm purpose of a stern resistance.' — 'This people have destroyed,' said another, 'what they never will rebuild.'"

What to do was now the question. In the mean time, a small body of infantry had descended the steep by the aid of trees, rocks, and stumps, and, fording the stream, had taken possession of a stone church on the other side. The line of wagons, brought to a stand, extended back along the road for a distance of a mile and a half. For miles around, the growth was dwarfed and scrubby, affording no timber to reconstruct the arch. It was now night; and weary, and not a little despondent, all sank to repose.

It so happened that there was in the army a Maine lumberman, Capt. Bodfish, who had been accustomed to surmount many difficulties of this kind in the logging-swamps of his native State. Gen. Pierce the next morning, at an early hour, sent for him. With a practised eye, he examined the ground, and said that he could construct a road over which the train could pass.

"How much time do you need," inquired Gen. Pierce, "to complete the road?"

"That depends," said he, "upon the number of men employed. If you give me five hundred men, I will furnish you a road over which the train can pass safely in four hours."

The detail was immediately ordered, and in *three hours* the trains were in motion. "Bodfish's road," says Gen. Pierce, "unless this nation shall be regenerated, will be the road at that place, for Mexican diligences, for half a century to come." Before the sun went down on the evening of the 23d, every wagon had passed without the slightest accident. There was great glee that night in the camp. Many were the jokes about Mexican stupidity and Yankee cunning. All were now eager to press on; for all felt new assurance in the final success of their bold enterprise.

They were approaching Cerro Gordo. From the heights in that vicinity, the Mexicans could easily embarrass the march by a

plunging fire. Gen. Pierce himself, with a body of cavalry, set out in the darkness and the rain to occupy the eminences. The darkness was so great, that one's hand could scarcely be seen before him; and it soon became impossible to advance. The detachment slept upon their arms until the earliest dawn of the morning, when they pressed on, and succeeded in seizing the important position. A few Mexicans were seen upon one of the heights, who discharged a volley of bullets, harmless from the distance, upon a portion of the train. A six-pounder was brought forward, which threw a few canister-shot into the midst of them; and they scattered in all directions.

They soon reached another of the magnificent estates of Santa Anna, well stocked with fat cattle. Gen. Pierce, in his journal, says very naïvely, "As there was no owner of whom to purchase, I have sent out detachments to supply our wants. The boys had great fun in playing 'hunt buffalo;' and, in the excitement of the chase, some of them wandered to an imprudent distance from the camp. One of them got a bullet-shot through the thigh in consequence. All the night, guerillas were prowling about the camp."

Upon Santa Anna's estate, or *hacienda* as it was called, they found delightful encampment upon a green lawn, gently sloping to a fine stream of clear, pure water. They were then but eight miles from Jalapa.

On the morning of the 24th, they left, with regret, their delightful encampment at Encero. The verdant lawn, the sparkling stream rippling over its pebbly bed, and the cultivated region around, reminded all of their New-England homes. At noon, they reached Jalapa unopposed. Here Gen. Pierce rode to an inn kept by a Frenchman, and dined. At the inn, he met several well-dressed, intelligent Mexicans. They were profuse in their commendations of the achievements of the Yankees. The army proceeded about three miles beyond the city, and encamped by another fine stream, "which drives the spindles of Don Garcia, a quarter of a mile below us." He there ascertained, that, beyond doubt, the *gentlemen* with whom he had conversed in the inn at Jalapa were guerillas in disguise. They were ever hovering around the skirts of the army, ready to murder and to rob as they could find opportunity. That very day, a servant, who had been sent to water a horse, not six rods from the road, was killed, and his horse stolen.

The next day, the 27th, as they made a short tarry in their encampment just out from Jalapa, several soldiers, who had wandered, in violation of orders, from the camp to the vicinity of the surrounding farms, never returned. It is supposed that they were either killed or captured.

On the morning of the 29th, at seven o'clock, the march was again resumed. The sick-list was increasing, and there were over four hundred on the surgeon's roll. Few inexperienced in such matters can imagine the care and skill requisite to move a body, even of twenty-four hundred men, hundreds of miles, with four hundred sick men in wagons, so that the wants of all shall be attended to, and that every man shall have his regular and proper meals. Fruits were abundant along the line of march, and the soldiers indulged freely. The rain was also falling in torrents, which kept all drenched to the skin, and penetrated the tents, while the flood rushed in torrents through the gullies.

The morning of the 30th found them near the Castle of Perote. "I reached the castle," Gen. Pierce writes, "before dark; and Col. Windcoop, who was in command of the castle, with Capt. Walker's elegant company of mounted riflemen, kindly tendered me his quarters. But I adhered to a rule from which I have never deviated on the march,—to see the rear of the command safely in camp; and, where they pitched their tents, to pitch my own. The rear-guard, in consequence of the broken condition of the road, did not arrive until nine o'clock; when our tents were pitched in darkness, and in the sand which surrounds the castle on all sides."

Here they made a halt of two or three days to repair damages, and to refresh the sick and the exhausted. Two hundred of the sick were sent to the hospital in the castle. The next day, Capt. Ruff arrived with a company of cavalry, having been sent by Gen. Scott to ascertain the whereabouts and condition of Gen. Pierce's command, and to afford him assistance if needed. Soon they resumed their march, and, on the 7th of August, reached the main body of the army under the commander-in-chief, at Puebla. Gen. Pierce had conducted twenty-four hundred men on this arduous march, without the loss of a single wagon.

Gen. Scott had been waiting at Puebla for the arrival of the re-enforcement under Gen. Pierce. He was now prepared to move vigorously forward in his attack upon the city of Mexico. Santa

Anna had an advance-guard of about seven thousand men at Contreras. Gen. Scott wished to cut off these detached troops from the main body of the Mexican army, and, by destroying their communications with the city, to have them at his mercy. He therefore sent a division of his army, by a circuitous route, to occupy the villages and strong positions in their rear. To hide this movement from the foe, and to distract their attention, Gen. Pierce was ordered, with four thousand men, to make an impetuous assault upon their front.

It was indeed severe service upon which he was thus detached. The enemy had nearly two to his one. They were in their own chosen positions, and were protected by intrenchments, from which, unexposed, they could hurl a storm of shot and shell into the faces of their assailants. The ground over which the charge was to be made was exceedingly rough, bristling with sharp points of rocks, and broken by ridges and gullies. The Mexicans threw out skirmishers, who were posted in great force among the irregularities of this broken ground. As our troops advanced, they were met with a murderous fire of musketry from these concealed riflemen, while the heavy balls from the Mexican batteries shivered the rocks around them. Had the Mexicans been expert gunners, Gen. Pierce's command would have been annihilated; but, fortunately or providentially, most of the shot from the intrenched camp passed over the heads of our troops.

"In the midst of this fire, Gen. Pierce," writes Hawthorne, his eloquent biographer, "being the only officer mounted in the brigade, leaped his horse upon an abrupt eminence, and addressed the colonels and captains of the regiments, as they passed, in a few stirring words, reminding them of the honor of their country, of the victory their steady valor would contribute to achieve. Pressing forward to the head of the column, he had nearly reached the practicable ground that lay beyond, when his horse slipped among the rocks, thrust his foot into a crevice, and fell, breaking his own leg, and crushing his rider heavily beneath him."

The general was stunned by the fall, and almost insensible. His orderly hastened to his assistance, and found him very severely bruised, and suffering agonizingly from a sprain of the left knee, upon which the horse had fallen. The bullets and balls of the enemy were flying thickly around. As the orderly attempted to assist the wounded general to reach the shelter of a



projecting rock, a shell buried itself in the earth at their feet, and, exploding, covered them with stones and sand. "That was a lucky miss," said Gen. Pierce calmly.

Leaving him under shelter of the rock, the orderly went in search of a surgeon. Fortunately, he met Dr. Ritchie near by, who was following the advancing column. He rendered such assistance as the circumstances would permit; and soon Gen. Pierce recovered full consciousness, and became anxious to rejoin his troops. Notwithstanding the surgeon's remonstrances, he leaned upon his orderly's shoulder, and, hobbling along, reached a battery, where he found a horse, whose saddle had just been emptied by a Mexican bullet. He was assisted into the saddle. "You will not be able to keep your seat," said one. "Then you must tie me on," replied the general. Thus bruised and sprained, and agonized with pain, he again rode forward into the hottest of the battle.

Till nightfall, the conflict raged unabated. It was eleven at night before Gen. Pierce left his saddle. He had withdrawn his troops from their exposed position, and assembled them in a sheltered spot, where they were to pass the night. The rain was then falling in torrents. It is a curious phenomenon, that it often rains almost immediately after a battle. There were no tents; there was no protection for officers or men: drenched, exhausted, hungry, they threw themselves upon the flooded sods for sleep. Gen. Pierce lay down upon an ammunition-wagon; but the torture of his inflamed and swollen knee would not allow him a moment of repose.

But one hour after midnight of that dark and stormy night had passed, when Gen. Pierce received orders from Gen. Scott to put his brigade in a new position in front of the enemy's works, to be prepared for a new assault with the earliest dawn of the morning. In the midst of the gloom and the storm, the movement was made.

As soon as a few glimmers of light were seen in the east, these men of invincible resolution and iron sinews were again on the move. Gen. Pierce was again in his saddle, and at the head of his brigade. The Mexican camp was attacked simultaneously in front and rear. In seventeen minutes, the "stars and stripes" floated over the ramparts of the foe; and the cheers of the victors proclaimed that the conquest was complete. Many prisoners were

taken. Those who escaped fled in wildest disorder towards Cherubusco.

Gen. Pierce almost forgot exhaustion, wounds, and agony, in his eager pursuit of the fugitives. The roads and fields were strewn with the dead and the dying, and every conceivable form of human mutilation and misery. The pursuit continued until one o'clock. The victors then found themselves checked by the strong fortifications of Cherubusco and San Antonio, where Santa Anna was prepared to make another desperate stand. Gen. Scott feared that Santa Anna might escape, and concentrate all his troops within the walls of the city of Mexico. To prevent this, he sent an aide, Col. Noah E. Smith, to call Gen. Pierce to his presence, that he might give him directions to take a route by which he could assail the foe in their rear. Col. Smith met the general at the head of his brigade. He writes, —

“Gen. Pierce was exceedingly thin, worn down by the fatigue and pain of the day and night before, and then evidently suffering severely. Still there was a glow in his eye, as the cannon boomed, that showed within him a spirit ready for the conflict.”

Gen. Scott was sitting on horseback beneath a tree, issuing orders to his staff, as Gen. Pierce rode up. The commander-in-chief had heard of the accident which had befallen the general, and, as he noticed his aspect of pain and physical exhaustion, said to him, —

“Pierce, my dear fellow, you are badly injured. You are not fit to be in the saddle.”

“Yes, general,” was the reply: “I am, in a case like this.”

“You cannot touch your foot to the stirrup,” said Scott.

“One I can,” answered Pierce.

Gen. Scott looked at him for a moment in silence, and then said in decided tones, “You are rash, Gen. Pierce: we shall lose you, and we cannot spare you. It is my duty to order you back to St. Augustine.”

But Gen. Pierce pleaded so earnestly that he might be permitted to remain, and take part in the great battle then imminent, that Scott at last reluctantly consented, and ordered him to advance with his brigade. His path led over a marsh, intersected with ditches filled with water. Over several of these ditches, the general leaped his horse. At last he came to one ten feet wide and six feet deep. He was there compelled to leave his horse. He,

however, succeeded in getting across the ditch, and was there with his troops under fire. He had now gone to the farthest point of physical endurance. Entirely overcome by sleeplessness, exhaustion, pain, and fatigue, he sank to the ground, fainting, and almost insensible.

Some soldiers hastened to lift him, and bear him from the field. He partially revived, and, resisting, said, "No: do not carry me off. Let me lie here." There he remained, in the midst of his struggling troops, exposed to the shot of the foe, while the tremendous battle of Cherubusco raged around him. At length, the cheers of our men announced their victory. Santa Anna sent a flag of truce, proposing an armistice. Gen. Pierce was appointed one of the commissioners to meet him. He was unable to walk, or to mount his horse without assistance. He was, however, helped into his saddle, and rode to Tacubaya; and the conference was held at the house of the British consul from late in the afternoon until four o'clock the next morning.

They could not come to satisfactory terms, and military operations were soon renewed. Not long after, on the 8th of September, the sanguinary battle of Molino del Rey, the fiercest conflict of the war, was fought. Gen. Worth, with three thousand men, attacked fourteen thousand Mexicans. Gen. Pierce was ordered to his support. Just as he reached the field, a shell burst almost beneath the feet of his horse; and he narrowly escaped being thrown over a precipice. Again the vanquished enemy fled, and made another stand under protection of the castle of Chapultepec. In the heroic storming of that castle, on the 13th of September, Gen. Pierce could take no part, though his brigade performed gallant service. But their general had been conveyed to the headquarters of Gen. Worth, where he was taken so extremely ill, that he was unable to leave his bed for thirty-six hours. This was the last great struggle. The city of Mexico now fell into the hands of the Americans. Gen. Pierce remained in the captured city until December, when he returned from these strange scenes of violence and blood to the wife and child whom he had left about nine months before among the peaceful hills of New Hampshire.

When Gen. Pierce reached his home in his native State, he was received enthusiastically by the advocates of the Mexican War, and coldly by its opponents. He resumed the exercise of

his profession, very frequently taking an active part in political questions, giving his cordial support to the proslavery wing of the Democratic party. The compromise measures met cordially with his approval; and he strenuously advocated the enforcement of the fugitive-slave law, which so shocked the religious sensibilities of the North. He thus became distinguished as a "Northern man with Southern principles." The strong partisans of slavery in the South consequently regarded him as a man whom they could safely trust in office to carry out their plans.

On the 12th of June, 1852, the Democratic convention met in Baltimore to nominate a candidate for the presidency. For four days they continued in session, and in thirty-five ballotings no one had obtained a two-thirds vote. Not a vote had thus far been thrown for Gen. Pierce. Then the Virginia delegation brought forward his name. There were fourteen more ballotings, during which Gen. Pierce constantly gained strength, until, at the forty-ninth ballot, he received two hundred and eighty-two votes, and all other candidates eleven. Gen. Winfield Scott was the Whig candidate. Gen. Pierce was chosen with great unanimity. Only four States — Vermont, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Tennessee — cast their electoral votes against him. On the 4th of March, 1853, he was inaugurated President of the United States.

His administration proved one of the most stormy our country had ever experienced. The controversy between slavery and freedom was then approaching its culminating point. It became evident that there was an "irrepressible conflict" between them, and that this nation could not long exist "half slave and half free." President Pierce, during the whole of his administration, did every thing which could be done to conciliate the South; but it was all in vain. The conflict every year grew more violent, and threats of the dissolution of the Union were borne to the north on every southern breeze.

At the demand of slavery, the Missouri Compromise was repealed, and all the Territories of the Union were thrown open to slavery. The Territory of Kansas, west of Missouri, was settled by emigrants mainly from the North. According to law, they were about to meet, and decide whether slavery or freedom should be the law of that realm. It was certain that they would decide for freedom.

Slavery in Missouri and other Southern States rallied her armed



legions, marched them in military array into Kansas, took possession of the polls, drove away the citizens, deposited their own votes by handfuls, went through the farce of counting them, and then declared, that, by an overwhelming majority, slavery was established in Kansas. These facts nobody denied; and yet President Pierce's administration felt bound to respect the decision obtained by such votes.

This armed mob from other States then chose a legislature of strong proslavery men; convened them in a small town near Missouri, where they could be protected from any opposition from the free-soil citizens of the State; and called this band, thus fraudulently elected, the "Legislature of Kansas." No one could deny these facts; and yet President Pierce deemed it his duty to recognize this body as the lawful legislature.

This bogus legislature met, and enacted a code of proslavery laws which would have disgraced savages. Neither freedom of speech nor of the press was allowed, and death was the doom of any one who should speak or write against slavery; and yet President Pierce assumed that these laws were binding upon the community.

The armed mob of invasion consisted of nearly seven thousand men. As they commenced their march, one of their leaders thus addressed them:—

"To those who have qualms of conscience as to violating laws, State or National, the time has come when such impositions must be disregarded, as your rights and property are in danger. I advise you, one and all, to enter every election district in Kansas, and vote at the point of the bowie-knife and revolver. Neither give nor take quarter, as our case demands it. It is enough that the slaveholding interest wills it, from which there is no appeal."

They marched with artillery, banners, music, and mounted horsemen. By such a force, infant Kansas was subjugated, and the most sacred rights of American freemen were trampled in the dust. When the army returned to the city of Independence in Missouri, the "squatter sovereign" of that place said, "They report that not a single antislavery man will be in the Legislature of Kansas."

The citizens of Kansas, the great majority of whom were free-State men, met in convention, and adopted the following resolve:—

"*Resolved*, That the body of men, who, for the past two months,

have been passing laws for the people of our Territory, moved, counselled, and dictated to by the demagogues of Missouri, are to us a foreign body, representing only the lawless invaders who elected them, and not the people of the territory; that we repudiate their action as the monstrous consummation of an act of violence, usurpation, and fraud, unparalleled in the history of the Union."

The free-State people of Kansas also sent a petition to the General Government, imploring its protection. In reply, the President issued a proclamation, declaring that the legislature thus created must be recognized as the legitimate legislature of Kansas, and that its laws were binding upon the people; and that, if necessary, the whole force of the governmental arm would be put forth to enforce those laws.

Such was the condition of affairs when President Pierce approached the close of his four-years' term of office. The North had become thoroughly alienated from him. The antislavery sentiment, goaded by these outrages, had been rapidly increasing; and all the intellectual ability and social worth of President Pierce were forgotten in deep reprehension of these administrative acts. The slaveholders of the South also, unmindful of the fidelity with which he had advocated those measures of Government which they approved, and perhaps, also, feeling that he had rendered himself so unpopular as no longer to be able acceptably to serve them, ungratefully dropped him, and nominated James Buchanan as the Democratic candidate to succeed him in the presidency. John C. Frémont was the candidate of the Free-soil party.

James Buchanan was the successful candidate. He had pledged himself to stand upon the same platform which his predecessor had occupied, "lowered never an inch." On the 4th of March, 1857, President Pierce retired to his home in Concord, N.H. Of three children, two had died, and his only surviving child had been killed before his eyes by a railroad accident; and his wife, one of the most estimable and accomplished of ladies, was rapidly sinking in consumption. The hour of dreadful gloom soon came, and he was left alone in the world, without wife or child.

When the terrible Rebellion burst forth, which divided our country into two parties, and two only, Mr. Pierce remained steadfast in the principles which he had always cherished, and gave his sympathies to that proslavery party with which he had ever been

allied. He declined to do any thing, either by voice or pen, to strengthen the hands of the National Government. He still lives, in the autumn of 1866, in Concord, N.H., one of the most genial and social of men, an honored communicant in the Episcopal Church, and one of the kindest of neighbors and best of friends.

## CHAPTER XV.

### JAMES BUCHANAN.

His Childhood's Home. — Devotion to Study. — Scholarship, and Purity of Character. — Congressional Career. — Political Views. — Secretary of State. — Minister to the Court of St. James. — Ostend Manifesto. — Elected to the Presidency. — The New-Haven Correspondence. — Disasters of his Administration. — Retirement.

JAMES BUCHANAN, the fifteenth President of the United States, was born in a small frontier town, at the foot of the eastern ridge



RESIDENCE OF JAMES BUCHANAN.

of the Alleghanies, in Franklin County, Penn., on the 23d of April, 1791. The place where the humble cabin of his father stood was called Stony Batter. It was a wild and romantic spot in a gorge of the mountains, with towering summits rising grandly



all around. His father was a native of the north of Ireland; a poor man, who had emigrated in 1783, with little property save his own strong arms. Five years after his arrival in this country, he married Elizabeth Spear, the daughter of a respectable farmer, and, with his young bride, plunged into the wilderness, staked his claim, reared his log-hut, opened a clearing with his axe, and settled down there to perform his obscure part in the drama of life.

In this secluded home, where James was born, he remained for eight years, enjoying but few social or intellectual advantages. His father was industrious, frugal, and prosperous, and was unusually intelligent for a man in his situation. His mother also was a woman of superior character, possessing sound judgment, and a keen appreciation of the beautiful in nature and in art. When James was eight years of age, his father removed to the village of Mercersburg, where his son was placed at school, and commenced a course of study in English, Latin, and Greek. His progress was rapid; and, at the age of fourteen, he entered Dickinson College, at Carlisle. Here he developed remarkable talent, and took his stand among the first scholars in the institution. His application to study was intense, and yet his native powers enabled him to master the most abstruse subjects with facility.

In the year 1809, he graduated with the highest honors of his class. He was then eighteen years of age; tall and graceful, vigorous in health, fond of athletic sports, an unerring shot, and enlivened with an exuberant flow of animal spirits. He immediately commenced the study of law in the city of Lancaster, and was admitted to the bar in 1812, when he was but twenty-one years of age. Very rapidly he rose in his profession, and at once took undisputed stand with the ablest lawyers of the State. When but twenty-six years of age, unaided by counsel, he successfully defended before the State Senate one of the judges of the State, who was tried upon articles of impeachment. At the age of thirty, it was generally admitted that he stood at the head of the bar; and there was no lawyer in the State who had a more extensive or a more lucrative practice.

Reluctantly, he then, in 1820, consented to stand a candidate for Congress. He was elected; and, for ten years, he remained a member of the Lower House. During the vacations of Congress, he occasionally tried some important cause. In 1831, he retired

altogether from the toils of his profession, having acquired an ample fortune.

In 1812, just after Mr. Buchanan had entered upon the practice of the law, our second war with England occurred. With all his powers, he sustained the Government, eloquently urging the vigorous prosecution of the war, and even enlisting as a private soldier to assist in repelling the British, who had sacked Washington, and were threatening Baltimore.

Mr. Buchanan was at this time a Federalist. This term took its rise from those who approved of the Federal Constitution, with all the powers which it gave to the National Government. The anti-Federalists, who thought that the Constitution gave the Central Government too much power, and the State Governments too little, took the name of Republicans. But, when the Constitution was adopted by both parties, Jefferson truly said, "We are all Federalists; we are all Republicans." Still it was subsequently found that the Constitution allowed some latitude of construction. Consequently, those who approved of a liberal construction, in favor of the General Government, still retained the name of Federalists; while those who were in favor of a strict construction, not allowing the Central Government one hair's breadth more of power than the letter of the Constitution demanded, retained the name of Republicans.

The opposition of the Federal party to the war with England, and the alien and sedition laws of John Adams, brought the party into dispute; and the name of Federalist became a reproach. Mr. Buchanan, almost immediately upon entering Congress, began to incline more and more to the policy of the Republicans.

As a member of Congress, Mr. Buchanan was faithful to his duties. He was always in his seat, and took an active part in every important question. The speeches which he made indicated great care in their preparation, and were distinguished for depth of thought and persuasive eloquence. The great question, as to the power of the National Government to promote internal improvements, agitated Congress. Mr. Buchanan was in sympathy with the Republicans, and voted against any appropriation to repair the Cumberland Road. The bill, however, passed Congress. President Monroe vetoed it. Mr. Buchanan argued that Congress was not authorized to establish a *protective* tariff; that it was authorized to impose a tariff for revenue only. In an earnest speech upon this subject, he said, —

"If I know myself, I am a politician neither of the East nor of the West, of the North nor of the South. I therefore shall forever avoid any expressions, the direct tendency of which must be to create sectional jealousies, and at length disunion,—that worst and last of all political calamities."

In the stormy presidential election of 1824, in which Jackson, Clay, Crawford, and John Quincy Adams, were candidates, Mr. Buchanan espoused the cause of Gen. Jackson, and unrelentingly opposed the administration of Mr. Adams. When our Government undertook the singular task of regulating the dress in which our ambassadors should appear in foreign courts, prohibiting the court-costume which most of those monarchs required, Mr. Buchanan supported the measure.

"Imagine," said he, "a grave and venerable statesman, who never attended a militia-training in his life, but who has been elevated to the station of a foreign minister in consequence of his civil attainments, appearing at court, arrayed in this military coat, with a chapeau under his arm, and a small sword dangling at his side! What a ridiculous spectacle would a grave lawyer or judge of sixty years of age present, arrayed in such a costume!"

Gen. Jackson, upon his elevation to the presidency, appointed Mr. Buchanan minister to Russia. The duties of his mission he performed with ability, which gave satisfaction to all parties. Upon his return, in 1833, he was elected to a seat in the United-States Senate. He there met, as his associates, Webster, Clay, Wright, and Calhoun. He advocated the measure proposed by President Jackson, of making reprisals against France to enforce the payment of our claims against that country; and defended the course of the President in his unprecedented and wholesale removals from office of those who were not the supporters of his administration. Upon this question, he was brought into direct collision with Henry Clay. He also, with voice and vote, advocated *expunging* from the journal of the Senate the vote of censure against Gen. Jackson for removing the deposits. Earnestly he opposed the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and urged the prohibition of the circulation of antislavery documents by the United-States mails.

In December, 1835, there was a fire in New York, which consumed property amounting to eighteen millions of dollars. The merchants, overwhelmed by this calamity, owed the United States

the sum of three million six hundred thousand dollars. A bill was introduced for their relief, simply asking for an extension of payment, with ample security. Generously and eloquently Mr. Buchanan advocated the bill. In the discussion of the question respecting the admission of Michigan and Arkansas into the Union, Mr. Buchanan "defined his position" by saying, —

"The older I grow, the more I am inclined to be what is called a State-rights man."

As to petitions on the subject of slavery, he advocated that they should be respectfully received; and that the reply should be returned, that Congress had no power to legislate upon the subject. "Congress," said he, "might as well undertake to interfere with slavery under a foreign government as in any of the States where it now exists." Many of his speeches developed great ability; all, earnestness and deep conviction; while he invariably treated his opponents in the most courteous manner, never allowing himself to exhibit the slightest irritation.

M. de Tocqueville, in his renowned work upon "Democracy in America," foresaw the trouble which was inevitable from the doctrine of State sovereignty as held by Calhoun and Buchanan. He was convinced that the National Government was losing that strength which was essential to its own existence, and that the States were assuming powers which threatened the perpetuity of the Union. Mr. Buchanan reviewed this book in the Senate, and declared the fears of De Tocqueville to be groundless: and yet he lived to sit in the presidential chair, and see State after State, in accordance with his own views of State rights, breaking from the Union, thus crumbling our republic into ruins; while the unhappy old man folded his arms in despair, declaring that the National Constitution invested him with no power to arrest the destruction.

When Mr. Tyler succeeded President Harrison, and, to the excessive disappointment of the Whigs, vetoed their bank bill, Mr. Buchanan warmly commended his course. In reply to the argument, that Mr. Tyler ought to have signed the bill in fidelity to the party which elected him, he said, —

"If he had approved that bill, he would have deserved to be denounced as a self-destroyer, as false to the whole course of his past life, false to every principle of honor, and false to the sacred obligation of his oath to support the Constitution."



Mr. Buchanan opposed the ratification of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty in reference to our North-eastern boundary; and advocated the annexation of Texas, that it might be cut up into slave States, "to afford that security to the Southern and South-western slave States which they have a right to demand." Upon Mr. Polk's accession to the presidency, Mr. Buchanan became Secretary of State, and, as such, took his share of the responsibility in the conduct of the Mexican War. Mr. Polk assumed that crossing the Nueces by the American troops into the disputed territory was not wrong, but for the Mexicans to cross the Rio Grande into that territory was a declaration of war. No candid man can read with pleasure the account of the course our Government pursued in that movement. At the close of Mr. Polk's administration, Mr. Buchanan retired to private life; but still his intellectual ability, and great experience as a statesman, enabled him to exert a powerful private influence in national affairs.

He identified himself thoroughly and warmly with the party devoted to the perpetuation and extension of slavery, and brought all the energies of his mind to bear against the Wilmot Proviso. He gave his cordial approval to the compromise measures of 1850, which included the fugitive-slave law. Mr. Pierce, upon his election to the presidency, honored Mr. Buchanan with the mission to England. The plan then arose to purchase Cuba. It was feared that Spain might abolish slavery in Cuba, and thus endanger the institution in our Southern States. To consider this important question, Mr. Buchanan, and Messrs. Mason and Soulé, our ministers to France and Spain, met at Ostend. The substance of the result of their deliberations is contained in the following words:—

"After we shall have offered Spain a price for Cuba far beyond its present value, and this shall have been refused, it will then be time to consider the question, 'Does Cuba, in the possession of Spain, seriously endanger our internal peace and the existence of our cherished Union?' Should this question be answered in the affirmative, then by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain, if we possess the power."

This Ostend Manifesto created intense excitement, both in this country and in Europe; but our own internal troubles which soon arose caused it to be forgotten. In the year 1856, a national Democratic convention nominated Mr. Buchanan for the presidency. In

the platform adopted by the convention, it was stated, in connection with other principles to which all parties would assent, "that Congress has no power under the Constitution to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States; that the foregoing proposition covers the whole subject of slavery agitation in Congress; that the Democratic party will adhere to a faithful execution of the compromise measures, the act of reclaiming fugitives from service or labor included; that the Democratic party will resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made; and that the American Democracy recognize and adopt the principles of non-interference by Congress with slavery in State and Territory, or in the District of Columbia."

The political conflict was one of the most severe in which our country has ever engaged. All the friends of slavery were on one side; all the advocates of its restriction and final abolition, on the other. Mr. Frémont, the candidate of the enemies of slavery, received 114 electoral votes. Mr. Buchanan received 174, and was elected. The popular vote stood 1,340,618 for Frémont, 1,224,750 for Buchanan. On the 4th of March, 1857, Mr. Buchanan was inaugurated President. The crowd which attended was immense, and the enthusiasm with which he was greeted had never been surpassed. Mr. Buchanan was a man of imposing personal appearance, an accomplished gentleman, endowed with superior abilities improved by the most careful culture, and no word had ever been breathed against the purity of his moral character. His long experience as a legislator, and the exalted offices he had filled at home and abroad, eminently fitted him for the station he was called to fill. Under ordinary circumstances, his administration would probably have been a success.

But such storms arose as the country had never experienced before. Mr. Buchanan was far advanced in life. But four years were wanting to fill up his threescore years and ten. His own friends, those with whom he had been allied in political principles and action for years, were seeking the destruction of the Government, that they might rear upon the ruins of our free institutions a nation whose corner-stone should be human slavery. In this emergency, Mr. Buchanan was hopelessly bewildered. He could not, with his long-avowed principles, consistently oppose the State-

rights party in their assumptions. As President of the United States, bound by his oath faithfully to administer the laws, he could not, without perjury of the grossest kind, unite with those endeavoring to overthrow the republic. He therefore did nothing.



INVASION OF KANSAS.

In August, 1857, a correspondence took place between a number of gentlemen of distinction in New Haven, Conn., and President Buchanan, which, in consequence of its having been made public by the President, has become historic. As this correspondence develops very clearly most of the points at issue between President Buchanan and the great Republican party which elected President Lincoln, we shall quote freely from it. Impartiality will be secured by allowing each of the parties to speak in its own language. The circumstances which called forth the correspondence were as follows :—

After the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, a struggle began, between the supporters of slavery and the advocates of freedom, for the possession of the Territory of Kansas by population and settlement. The more vigorous emigration from the free States,



induced by voluntary organizations to favor it, soon resulted in a large excess of population in favor of freedom. To wrest from this majority their proper control in the legislation and regulation of this Territory, large organized and armed mobs repeatedly passed over from the contiguous State of Missouri, and appeared in force at the polls. We have described these occurrences with some particularity in the sketch of President Pierce.

They drove away the regularly constituted inspectors of election, and substituted their own, who received the votes of the mob without scruple. In some instances, lists of fictitious votes were returned under feigned names; and representatives of the Missouri mob were thereby furnished by the fraudulent inspectors with regular forms of election. Unfortunately, the territorial governor of Kansas (Reeder), embarrassed by these regular forms, and not knowing how far he would be justified in disputing them, did not, in all instances, withhold his certificates from these fraudulent claimants to seats in the legislature long enough for the people to bring evidence of the fraud. The administrations of both Presidents Pierce and Buchanan, and the supporters of those administrations, strongly proslavery in their sympathies, upheld this iniquitously chosen legislature in its authority and acts.

Gov. Walker, who succeeded Gov. Reeder, in a public address to the citizens of Kansas, announced that President Buchanan was determined to sustain this legislature, thus mob elected, as the lawful legislature of Kansas; and that its acts would be enforced by executive authority and by the army. This announcement created intense excitement with the advocates of liberty all over the Union.

About forty of the most distinguished gentlemen of New Haven, embracing such names as Benjamin Silliman, A. C. Twining, Nathaniel W. Taylor, Theodore Woolsey, Charles L. English, and Leonard Bacon, sent a Memorial to the President upon this subject. It has recently appeared, in the published Life of Professor Silliman, that the paper was from the pen of Professor A. C. Twining, LL.D. It reads as follows:—

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

“The undersigned, citizens of the United States, and electors of the State of Connecticut, respectfully offer to your Excellency this Memorial:—



"The fundamental principle of the Constitution of the United States, and of our political institutions, is, *that the people shall make their own laws, and elect their own rulers.*

"We see with grief, if not with astonishment, that Gov. Walker of Kansas openly represents and proclaims that the President of the United States is employing through him an army, one purpose of which is to force the people of Kansas to obey laws not their own, nor of the United States, but laws which it is notorious, and established upon evidence, they never made, and rulers they never elected.

"We represent, therefore, that, by the foregoing, your Excellency is openly held up and proclaimed, to the great derogation of our national character, as violating in its most essential particular the solemn *oath* which the President has taken to support the *Constitution of this Union.*

"We call attention further to the fact, that your Excellency is in like manner held up to this nation, to all mankind, and to all posterity, in the attitude of levying war against a portion of the United States, by employing arms in Kansas to uphold a body of men, and a code of enactments, purporting to be legislative, but which never had the election nor the sanction nor the consent of the people of that Territory.

"We earnestly represent to your Excellency, that we also have taken the oath to obey the Constitution; and your Excellency may be assured that we shall not refrain from the prayer that Almighty God will make your administration an example of justice and beneficence, and, with his terrible majesty, protect our people and our Constitution."

To this, which was called the Silliman Letter, the President returned a very carefully-written reply from his own hand, covering seventeen folio pages. As he was well aware that the distinguished character of the memorialists would stamp the Memorial with importance, and attract to it national attention, it cannot be doubted that he took counsel in its preparation, and presented those arguments upon which he and his cabinet wished to rely with posterity in defence of their measures. After some preliminary remarks, which had but little bearing upon the points at issue, he said,—

"When I entered upon the duties of the presidential office, on

the 4th of March last, what was the condition of Kansas? This Territory had been organized under the act of Congress of 30th May, 1854; and the government, in all its branches, was in full operation. A governor, secretary of the Territory, chief justice, two associate justices, a marshal, and district attorney, had been appointed by my predecessor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and were all engaged in discharging their respective duties. A code of laws had been enacted by the territorial legislature; and the judiciary were employed in expounding and carrying these laws into effect. It is quite true that a controversy had previously arisen respecting the validity of the election of members of the territorial legislature, and of the laws passed by them; but, at the time I entered upon my official duties, Congress had recognized the legislature in different forms and by different enactments.

“The delegate elected by the House of Representatives under a territorial law had just completed his term of service on the day previous to my inauguration. In fact, I found the government of Kansas as well established as that of any other Territory.

“Under these circumstances, what was my duty? Was it not to sustain this government? to protect it from the violence of lawless men who were determined either to rule or ruin? to prevent it from being overturned by force? in the language of the Constitution, ‘to take care that the laws be faithfully executed’? It was for this purpose, and this alone, that I ordered a military force to Kansas, to act as a *posse comitatus* in aiding the civil magistrate to carry the laws into execution.

“The condition of the Territory at the time, which I need not portray, rendered this precaution absolutely necessary. In this state of affairs, would I not have been justly condemned, had I left the marshal, and other officers of like character, impotent to execute the process and judgments of courts of justice established by Congress, or by the territorial legislature under its express authority, and thus have suffered the government itself to become an object of contempt in the eyes of the people? And yet this is what you designate as forcing ‘the people of Kansas to obey laws not their own, nor of the United States;’ and for doing which, you have denounced me as having violated my solemn oath.

"I ask, What else could I have done, or ought I to have done? Would you have desired that I should abandon the territorial government, sanctioned as it had been by Congress, to illegal violence, and thus renew the scenes of civil war and bloodshed which every patriot in the country had deplored? This would have been, indeed, to violate my oath of office, and to fix a damning blot on the character of my administration.

"I most cheerfully admit that the necessity for sending a military force to Kansas to aid in the execution of the civil law reflects no credit upon the character of our country. But let the blame fall upon the heads of the guilty. Whence did this necessity arise? A portion of the people of Kansas, unwilling to trust to the ballot-box,—the certain American remedy for the redress of all grievances,—undertook to create an independent government for themselves. Had this attempt proved successful, it would, of course, have subverted the existing government prescribed and recognized by Congress, and substituted a revolutionary government in its stead.

"This was a usurpation of the same character as it would be for a portion of the people of Connecticut to undertake to establish a separate government within its chartered limits, for the purpose of redressing any grievance, real or imaginary, of which they might have complained against the legitimate State Government. Such a principle, if carried into execution, would destroy all lawful authority, and produce universal anarchy.

"I ought to specify more particularly a condition of affairs which I have embraced only in general terms, requiring the presence of a military force in Kansas. The Congress of the United States had most wisely declared it to be 'the true intent and meaning of this act' (the act organizing the Territory) 'not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.'

"As a natural consequence, Congress has also prescribed by the same act, that, when the Territory of Kansas shall be admitted as a State, it 'shall be received into the Union, with or without slavery, as their Constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission.' Slavery existed at that period, and still exists, in Kansas, under the Constitution of the United States. This point

has at last been finally decided by the highest tribunal known to our laws. How it could ever have been seriously doubted, is to me a mystery. If a confederation of sovereign States acquire a new Territory at the expense of the common blood and treasure, surely one set of the partners can have no right to exclude the other from its enjoyment by prohibiting them from taking into it whatsoever is recognized as property by the common Constitution.

"But when the people,\* the *bonâ-fide* residents of such Territory, proceed to frame a State Constitution, then it is their right to decide the important question for themselves, — whether they will continue, modify, or abolish slavery. To them, and to them alone, does this question belong, free from all foreign interference. 'In the opinion of the territorial legislature of Kansas, the time had arrived for entering the Union; and they accordingly passed a law to elect delegates for the purpose of framing a State constitution. This law was fair and just in its provisions. It conferred the right of suffrage on 'every *bonâ-fide* inhabitant of the Territory,'† and, for the purpose of preventing fraud and the intrusion of citizens of near or distant States, most properly confined this right to those who had resided there three months previous to the election.

"Here a fair opportunity was presented for all the qualified resident citizens of the Territory, to whatever organization they

\* It is to be observed that President Buchanan limits the term *people* to mean *white* people only. If a man had the slightest tinge of colored blood in his veins, he was not to be considered as one of the *people*. If there were two hundred thousand colored persons in the State, and one hundred thousand white persons, it was "most wisely declared" that these white persons should be permitted to decide whether these colored persons should work for them, without wages, in lifelong bondage. It was "most wisely declared" that James Buchanan, a *white man*, should be permitted to decide whether Frederick Douglas, a *colored man*, and in no respect his inferior, either morally, intellectually, or physically, should be compelled to black his boots, and groom his horse, from the cradle to the grave; and *should* James Buchanan thus decide, and *should* Frederick Douglas make any objection to the decision, "illegal, unjustifiable, unconstitutional," then it was fitting that a United-States army should be sent under the "stars and the stripes" to compel Frederick Douglas to ply the shoebrush and the curry-comb for James Buchanan. And this was called *democracy*, "equal rights for all"!

† Colored persons, no matter how intelligent, wealthy, or refined, were no more considered *inhabitants* than they were considered *people*. As Mr. Buchanan employs these words with a significance different from that in which they are defined in every English dictionary, it is necessary to explain the sense in which he uses them in order to make his meaning clear.



might have previously belonged, to participate in the election, and to express their opinions at the ballot-box on the question of slavery. But numbers of lawless men\* still continue to resist the regular territorial government. They refused either to be registered or to vote, and the members of the convention were elected legally and properly without their intervention.

"The convention will soon assemble to perform the solemn duty of framing a constitution for themselves and their posterity; and, in the state of incipient rebellion† which still exists in Kansas, it is my imperative duty to employ the troops of the United States, should this become necessary, in defending the convention against violence while framing the constitution; and in protecting the *bonâ-fide* inhabitants qualified to vote under the provisions of this instrument in the free exercise of the right of suffrage, when it shall be submitted to them for their approbation or rejection.

"Following the wise example of Mr. Madison towards the Hartford Convention, illegal and dangerous combinations, such as that of the Topeka Convention, will not be disturbed, unless they shall attempt to perform some act which will bring them into actual collision with the Constitution and the laws."

The above contains the whole of Mr. Buchanan's reply bearing upon the points at issue. As this question was so all-absorbing during his administration, and created such intense excitement throughout the whole country, justice to Mr. Buchanan seemed to demand that his views, which were cordially accepted and indorsed by his party, should be fully unfolded. This reply, President Buchanan caused to be published, with the Memorial; and it was very widely circulated. By the friends of his administration, it was declared to be triumphant. The rejoinder on the part of the memorialists consisted of an address to the public, also from the pen of Professor Twining. It is too long to be quoted; but its substance is contained in the following extracts:—

\* These "lawless men" were the free-State men of Kansas, who met in convention, and passed the resolve, "That the body of men who for the last two months have been passing laws for the people of our Territory, moved, counselled, and dictated to by the demagogues of Missouri, are to us a foreign body, representing only the lawless invaders who elected them, and not the people of the Territory; that we repudiate their action as the monstrous consummation of an act of violence, usurpation, and fraud, unparalleled in the history of the Union."

† These *rebels* were those who objected to the State being ruled by "border-ruffians" from Missouri.

"No man will question that the inhabitants of Kansas, by their Organic Act, became possessed of the same elective privilege with the people of a State, just so far, at least, as that act entitles them to it. Since, therefore, it cannot be denied that the Constitution extends its protection over the elective franchise in that Territory as fully as in any State of the Union, it follows that the employment of troops to compel obedience to a notoriously non-elected and therefore usurping body, would, if performed in a sovereign State, Connecticut for example, be no more fully an unconstitutional act, no more really levying war against a portion of the United States, than if performed in Kansas.

"Are we, inhabitants of the comparatively feeble State of Connecticut, to hold our liberties at so precarious a tenure, that if, hereafter, thousands of armed men from our stronger neighbor in the West shall make an incursion among us, seize our ballot-boxes, deposit their votes, and write certificates for representatives of their own choosing, with the point of the sword, the President of this Union shall assume to compel our obedience 'by the whole power of the Government'? Could it be expected that even such a menace would drive our citizens to recognize any valid authority in a mere *banditti*, because of their possession of the stolen and empty forms of law and government?

"It has been denied by the apologists of the Missouri invaders, that what is called the Territorial Legislature of Kansas is, in fact, such a non-elected and usurping body as we have just described. How stands this in the President's reply? Does that reply deny that the body referred to 'never had the election nor sanction nor consent of the people of the Territory'? Not at all. In that document, emanating from so high a source, no such denial is made. Nay, we are at liberty to receive it as more; even as being, under the circumstances, an impressive recognition. And yet, while he does not deny our chief assertion and fact, the President justifies the employment of troops to uphold a body of men and a code of enactments which he has tacitly admitted never had the election nor sanction nor consent of the people of the Territory.

"But the President puts forward a vindication. It rests almost entirely upon two grounds, which we feel called upon briefly to review. The first ground may be sufficiently stated by a single quotation from his document: 'At the time I entered upon my

official duties, Congress had recognized this legislature in different forms and by different enactments.'

"What particular forms and enactments are intended, is, with a single exception, left to our conjecture; but by attentively considering that exception, which amounts only to the admission of a delegate to the House after two marked rejections, you will clearly apprehend that there never was any enactment of Congress from which any thing more could be derived than some doubtful or imperfect constructive recognition of the territorial body referred to.

"Our first answer, then, to the ground of vindication above stated, is an explicit denial that any joint action of the House and the Senate, not to mention the President, *expressly purporting* to recognize or make valid the body in question, can be found among the statutes of this nation,—any thing approaching in solemnity the Organic Act. Again: we assert that the Organic Act stands in all the force of an unrepealed national law. And in this we refer especially to its provisions for an *elective representation of the people*. No man will dispute us on this point. That great charter of popular representation in Kansas remains unrevoked; and it is undeniable, that the fundamental Organic Act ought to and must control all side-issues. Mere implications cannot be construed to conflict with the unmistakable and express enactments according to which the 'duly elected' legislative assembly shall consist of the persons having the highest number of *legal votes*, and with the intent '*to leave the people thereof* (i.e. of the Territory) *free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject* (not to invaders, but) *only to the Constitution of the United States.*'

"And here we might rest; for here our answer is complete. But we go farther, and deny the propriety even of the implications claimed. The President adduces specifically only the admission of a delegate sent to the House by the supporters of the usurping legislature. Now, it is enough to remark in reply, that, although the admission of a delegate is final as to his seat for a time, it has not even force to oblige a succeeding Congress not to exclude him, much less to oblige a President to subjugate a Territory. But is it on such a knife-edge as this that the franchise of a whole people is made to oscillate and tremble? and is this the logic which guides our statesmen?

“To adduce a meagre vote of a single branch of the Government as an act of Congress; to adduce it as such in the face of the repeated adverse action of even that single branch; to do this by ignoring the procedures of that same branch, which, acting as the grand inquest of the nation, had sent forth the details of frauds and the evidence of invalidity, on the strength of which, as contained in the report of their investigating committee, they had *formally voted to abrogate the body for whom their sanction is now claimed!*

“The Organic Act, and, under it, the fundamental principle of our Constitution, stand in full force in Kansas. But, contrary to that act and that principle, a body of men are assuming to legislate, who were never elected or sanctioned by the people. When, therefore, the President offers his oath and his obligation to see the laws faithfully executed, as a plea for supporting that illegal body, he proposes the solecism, that his obligation to the laws binds him to subvert the organic law, and that his oath to preserve and protect the Constitution binds him to contravene the very fundamental element of the Constitution.

“The President’s other ground of vindication is embraced in the following extracts: ‘I found the government of Kansas as well established as that of any other Territory. A governor, secretary of the Territory, chief justice, two associate justices, a marshal, and district attorney, had been appointed by my predecessor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. A code of laws had been enacted by the *territorial legislature* (mark our Italics), and the judiciary were employed in carrying those laws into effect.’

“We assent to the proposition, that if the *bonâ-fide* settlers of Kansas have, as a body, given their sanction and consent to the representative authority of the territorial legislature above referred to, even without having given it their election, and if that authority is of force to execute its enactments in the Territory, it constitutes *de facto*, in union with the Federal Government and other officers, a valid republican government; but then that sanction, it is obvious, must have been the clear, explicit, unmistakable act of the majority. How, then, does the fact stand in the instance before you?

“So far from such sanction or consent of the majority being in evidence, or even presumable, the President’s reply itself sup-



plies distinct proof, in part, to the reverse; and facts notorious to common information supply the rest. 'A portion of the people of Kansas,' you read in the reply, 'undertook to create an independent government for themselves,' 'continued to resist the regular territorial government,' and even 'refused either to be registered or vote.'

"A '*portion of the people*' have always acted out a strong protest. How large a *portion*, the reply does not state; but you are aware, from good authorities, that it is *two-thirds* at least, and perhaps *four-fifths*, of the entire population."

After showing the conclusive evidence upon which this fact is established, evidence which *no one* now calls in question, the memorialists continue, —

"The emphatic protest of the majority in Kansas, which was expressed by their afore-mentioned refusal to vote, is imputed to them by the President as a political and public wrong. His language is, 'A portion of the people of Kansas, unwilling to trust to the ballot-box, — the certain American remedy for the redress of all grievances, — undertook to create an independent government. Numbers of lawless men continued to resist the territorial legislature. They refused either to be registered or to vote.'

"The resistance of these *lawless men*, be it observed, was merely a steady refusal to vote, or to recognize the pretended legislature. But were they indeed unwilling to trust the ballot-box? When and how? Was it in November, 1854, when, at the first election for a delegate, they were overpowered by parties of armed intruders, who, obtaining violent possession of the polls, cast about six-tenths the entire vote of the Territory? Was it in the following March, when thousands of armed men from Missouri, with tents, provision-wagons, music, and the entire appointments of an invading army, poured into Kansas, occupied every council district, took possession of the ballot-boxes, and excluded all rightful voters whose sentiments were not agreeable to them? Has it been at any subsequent election, every one of which has been controlled by voters from Missouri? Under these circumstances, which are all open to the light of day, the reproachful charge of being 'unwilling to trust to the ballot-box' cannot reach those at whom it is aimed.

"Fellow-citizens, we know not why the President should have

introduced to us and to you the exciting subject of slavery, respecting which our Memorial was silent. We leave his startling assertions on that subject, without any other comment than that our silence is not to be construed into any assent."

The friends of Mr. Buchanan's administration, North and South, were satisfied with his letter. They accepted and adopted the views it expressed as a triumphant defence of the policy which the Government was pursuing. On the other hand, the opponents of the administration accepted and adopted the views contained in the Memorial of the New-Haven gentlemen, and in their response to the President's letter. It was upon this very platform that the Hon. Stephen A. Douglass planted his feet so firmly, and in defence of which he fought, perhaps, the most heroic battle ever waged in senatorial halls. This was essentially the issue which was presented to the nation in the next presidential election, and which resulted in the choice of Abraham Lincoln by an overwhelming majority of votes.

In the great excitement which this state of things created in the United States, the opponents of Mr. Buchanan's administration nominated Abraham Lincoln as their standard-bearer in the next presidential canvass. The proslavery party declared, that if he were elected, and the control of the Government were thus taken from their hands, they would secede from the Union, taking with them, as they retired, the National Capitol at Washington, and the lion's share of the territory of the United States.

Mr. Buchanan's sympathy with the proslavery party was such, that he had been willing to offer them far more than they had ventured to claim. All that the South had professed to ask of the North was *non-intervention* upon the subject of slavery. Mr. Buchanan had been ready to offer them the active co-operation of the Government to defend and extend the institution. In a "private and confidential letter," addressed to Jeff. Davis in 1850, he wrote, in reference to a letter which he was urged to have published, —

"From a careful examination of the proceedings in Congress, it is clear that *non-intervention* is all that will be required by the South. Under these circumstances, it would be madness in me to publish my letter, and take higher ground for the South than they have taken for themselves. This would be to out-Herod Herod, and to be more Southern than the South. I shall be assailed by

fanatics and free-soilers as long as I live for having gone farther in support of the rights of the South than Southern senators and representatives."

As the storm increased in violence, the slaveholders claiming the right to secede, and Mr. Buchanan avowing that Congress had no power to prevent it, one of the most pitiable exhibitions of governmental imbecility was exhibited the world has ever seen. As soon as it was known that Mr. Lincoln was elected, the slaveholding States, drilled to the movement, began to withdraw. Mr. Buchanan had not a word of censure for them. All his rebukes were addressed to those who had wished to prevent the extension of slavery. "The long-continued and intemperate interference," he said, "of the Northern people with the question of slavery in the Southern States, has at length produced its natural effects." He declared that Congress had no power to enforce its laws in any State which had withdrawn, or which was attempting to withdraw, from the Union. This was not the doctrine of Andrew Jackson, when, with his hand upon his sword-hilt, he exclaimed, "The Union must and shall be preserved!" It was an alarming state of things when the supreme Executive declared that he had no power "to take care that the laws be faithfully executed."

Innumerable plans of concession were proposed; but the secessionists did not hesitate to avow their utter contempt for the Government of the United States, and to spurn its advances. Mr. Buchanan approached the rebels on his knees. They hastened to avail themselves of his weakness, and to accomplish all their disorganizing measures before his successor should come into power.

South Carolina seceded in December, 1860; nearly three months before the inauguration of President Lincoln. Mr. Buchanan looked on in listless despair. The rebel flag was raised in Charleston; Fort Sumter was besieged; "The Star of the West," in endeavoring to carry food to its famishing garrison, was fired upon; and still Mr. Buchanan sat in the White House, wringing his hands, and bemoaning his helplessness. Our forts, navy-yards, and arsenals were seized; our dépôts of military stores were plundered; and our custom-houses and post-offices were appropriated by the rebels: and all that President Buchanan could do was to send a secret messenger to Charleston to implore the rebels to

hold back their hand a little until the close of his administration.\* Members of his cabinet began to retire, and join the rebels, after they had scattered the fleet, and robbed the arsenals and the public treasure.

The energy of the rebels, and the imbecility of our Executive, were alike marvellous. Before the close of January, the rebels had plundered the nation of millions of property, had occupied and fortified many of the most important strategic points, had chosen their flag, and organized their government; while President Buchanan had not lifted a hand to check them. The nation looked on in agony, waiting for the slow weeks to glide away, and close this administration, so terrible in its weakness.

Gen. Scott, in view of the threatening aspect of affairs, called repeatedly upon President Buchanan, and urged that strong garrisons should be sent to all the imperilled forts. Many of these forts had no garrisons at all, and could at any time be seized and appropriated by the rebels, rendering their reconquest costly in both blood and treasure. Mr. Buchanan would not permit them to be strengthened. Gen. Scott entreated that at least a circular might be sent to the forts where there *were* garrisons, giving them warning of their peril, and urging them to be on the alert. His request was not granted until it was too late to be of avail.

Had Gen. Scott's plan been adopted, it would have placed all the arsenals and forts commanding the Southern rivers and strategic points so firmly in the hands of the National Government, that the rebels would scarcely have ventured to attack them. In all probability, it would have prevented the uprising. It would have saved the country four thousand millions of money, and nearly a million of lives. Whatever may have been the motives which influenced Mr. Buchanan, no one can be blind as to the result of his conduct. Probably history may be searched in vain for a parallel case, in which the chief ruler of a great country, the secretary of war, and the secretary of the navy, all seemed

\* "By the middle of December, Hon. Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts, was dispatched to Charleston by President Buchanan as a commissioner or confidential agent of the Executive. His errand was a secret one; but, so far as its object was allowed to transpire, he was understood to be the bearer of a proffer from Mr. Buchanan, that he would not attempt to re-enforce Major Anderson, nor initiate any hostilities against the secessionists, provided they would evince a like pacific spirit by respecting the Federal authorities down to the close of his administration, now but a few weeks distant." — *The American Conflict*, by Horace Greeley, vol. i. p. 409.



to combine to leave the most important fortresses of the nation in as defenceless a condition as possible, when arrogant and armed rebellion was threatening their capture. Was this treachery? Was it imbecility?

It is very evident that for some reason the secessionists had no fear that President Buchanan would place any obstacles in their path. In December, 1860, Hon. L. M. Keitt was serenaded in Columbia, S.C. In response, he made a speech, in which he is reported to have said as follows:—

“South Carolina cannot take one step backwards now without receiving the curses of posterity. South Carolina, single and alone, is bound to go out of this accursed Union. *Mr. Buchanan is pledged to secession, and I mean to hold him to it.* Take your destinies in your own hands, and shatter this accursed Union. South Carolina can do it alone; but, if she cannot, she can at least throw her arms around the pillars of the Constitution, and involve all the States in a common ruin.”

When South Carolina, under the leadership of John C. Calhoun, in the days of Andrew Jackson's presidency, was threatening nullification and secession, Gen. Scott received an order from the War Department to hasten to Washington. He arrived in the evening, and immediately had an interview with the President. “The Union must and shall be preserved,” said Gen. Jackson, as he inquired of Gen. Scott his views as to the best military measures to be adopted.

Gen. Scott suggested strong garrisons for Fort Moultrie, Castle Pinckney, and for the arsenal at Augusta, which was filled with the *matériel* of war. Fort Sumter was not then built. He also urged that a sloop-of-war and several armed revenue-cutters should be immediately sent to Charleston Harbor.

“Proceed at once,” said Gen. Jackson, “and execute those views. I give you *carte blanche* in respect to troops. The vessels shall be there, and written instructions shall follow you.”

Under these *persuasives*, nullification and secession soon came to grief. There surely was as great a difference in the treatment of the disease by Jackson and by Buchanan as there was in the results of that treatment.

At length the long-looked-for hour of deliverance came, when the sceptre was to fall from the powerless hands of Mr. Buchanan, and to be grasped by another, who would wield it with more of

the dignity and energy becoming the chief ruler of one of the most powerful nations on the globe. It was the 4th of March, 1861. Attempts had been made by the rebels to assassinate Abraham Lincoln on his journey to Washington. Very narrowly he escaped. It was deemed necessary to adopt the most careful precautions to secure him from assassination on the day of his inauguration. Mr. Buchanan remained in Washington to see his successor installed, and then retired to his home in Wheatland.

The administration of President Buchanan was certainly the most calamitous our country has experienced. His best friends cannot recall it with pleasure. And still more deplorable it is for his fame, that, in the dreadful conflict which rolled its billows of flame and blood over our whole land, no word came from the lips of President Buchanan to indicate his wish that our country's banner should triumph over the flag of rebellion. He might by a few words have rendered the nation the most signal service; but those words were not spoken. He still lives, in the fall of 1866, in his beautiful retreat at Wheatland, at the advanced age of seventy-five.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Life in a Log-cabin.—Excellence of Character early developed.—A Day-laborer.—A Boatman.—A Shopkeeper.—A Student.—A Legislator.—A Lawyer.—A Member of Congress.—A Political Speaker.—The Debate with Douglas.—Eloquence of Mr. Lincoln.—Nominated for the Presidency.—Habits of Temperance.—His Sentiments.—Anecdotes.—Acts of his Administration.—His Assassination.

IN the interior of the State of Kentucky, there is the county of Larue. Even now, it is but sparsely populated. Seventy-five



RESIDENCE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

years ago it was quite a wilderness, highly picturesque in its streams, its forests, and its prairies; in places, smooth as a floor, and again swelling into gentle undulations like the ocean at the subsidence of a storm. The painted Indian here had free range;

a savage more ferocious than the wild beasts he pursued. Though Daniel Boone had explored this region, and had returned to the other side of the Alleghanies laden with peltry, and with the report that it was an earthly paradise, there were but few who were ready to plunge into the pathless wilderness, leaving all vestiges of civilization hundreds of miles behind them. But Providence, for the sake of peopling this country, seems to have raised up a peculiar class of men, who loved hardship and peril and utter loneliness. The Indians were always clustered in villages; but these men, the pioneers of civilization, penetrated the recesses of the forest, and reared their cabins in the most secluded valleys, where they seldom heard the voice or saw the face of their brother-man.

About the year 1780, when the war of the Revolution was still raging, one of these men, Abraham Lincoln, left the beautiful Valley of the Shenandoah, in Virginia, for the wilds of Kentucky. His wife and one or two children accompanied him. There were no roads; there were no paths but the trail of the Indian. All their worldly goods they must have carried in packs upon their backs; unless, possibly, they might have been enabled to take with them a horse or a mule. What motive could have induced a civilized man to take such a step, it is difficult to imagine; and still, from the earliest settlement of our country until the present day, there have been thousands thus ever crowding into the wilderness. Only two years after this emigration, Abraham Lincoln, still a young man, while working one day in his field, was stealthily approached by an Indian, and shot dead. His widow was left in the extreme of poverty with five little children. How she struggled along through the terrible years of toil and destitution, we are not informed. It was one of those unwritten tragedies of which earth is full.

There were three boys and two girls in the family. Thomas, the youngest of these boys, was four years of age at the time of his father's death. This Thomas was the father of Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, whose name must henceforth forever be enrolled amongst the most prominent in the annals of our world. Of course, no record has been kept of the life of one so lowly as Thomas Lincoln. He was among the poorest of the poor. His home was a wretched log-cabin; his food, the coarsest and the meanest. Education he had none: he could never



either read or write. As soon as he was able to do any thing for himself, he was compelled to leave the cabin of his starving mother, and push out into the world, a friendless, wandering boy, seeking work. He hired himself out, and thus spent the whole of his youth as a laborer in the fields of others.

When twenty-eight years of age, he built a log-cabin of his own, and married Nancy Hanks, the daughter of another family of poor Kentucky emigrants, who had also come from Virginia. Their second child was Abraham Lincoln, the subject of this sketch. Thomas, his father, was a generous, warm-hearted, good-natured man, with but little efficiency. He greatly deplored his want of education, and was anxious that his children should not suffer in this respect as he had done. The mother of Abraham was a noble woman, gentle, loving, pensive, created to adorn a palace, doomed to toil and pine and die in a hovel. "All that I am, or hope to be," exclaims the grateful son, "I owe to my angel-mother: blessings on her memory!"

Both the father and mother of Abraham Lincoln were earnest Christians. Their grateful son could ever say, —

"'Tis not my boast that I deduce my birth  
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise, —  
The child of parents passed into the skies."

Abraham's mother had received some education, and would often delight her children by reading them some story from the very few books she could command. In that remote region, schools were few, and very humble in their character. Abraham, when in his seventh year, was sent to one teacher for about two months, and to another for about three. His zeal was so great, that, in that time, he learned both to read and write. His parents were members of the Baptist Church; and occasionally an itinerant preacher came along, and gathered the scattered families under a grove or in a cabin for religious service. Good old Parson Elkin gave Abraham his first ideas of public speaking.

When he was eight years of age, his father sold his cabin and small farm, and moved to Indiana. Three horses took the family and all their household goods a seven-days' journey to their new home. Here kind neighbors helped them in putting up another log-cabin. In a home more cheerless and comfortless than the

readers of the present day can easily comprehend, Mrs. Lincoln, with the delicate organization, both of body and mind, of a lady, sank and died beneath the burdens which crushed her. Abraham was then ten years of age. Bitterly he wept as his mother was laid in her humble grave beneath the trees near the cabin. The high esteem in which this noble woman was held may be inferred from the fact that Parson Elkin rode a hundred miles on horseback, through the wilderness, to preach her funeral-sermon; and the neighbors, to the number of two hundred, who were scattered in that sparsely-settled region over a distance of twenty miles, assembled to attend the service.

It was a scene for a painter,—the log-cabin, alone in its solitude; the wide-spread prairie, beautiful in the light of the sabbath-morning sun; the grove; the grave; the group seated around upon logs and stumps; the venerable preacher; the mourning family; and Abraham, with his marked figure and countenance, his eyes swimming with tears, gazing upon the scene which was thus honoring the memory of his revered mother.

Abraham had written the letter inviting the pastor to preach the funeral-sermon. He soon became the scribe of the uneducated community around him. He could not have had a better school than this to teach him to put thoughts into words. He also became an eager reader. The books he could obtain were few; but these he read and re-read until they were almost committed to memory. The Bible, *Æsop's "Fables,"* and the "*Pilgrim's Progress,*" were his favorites. The *Lives of Washington, Franklin, and Clay,* produced a deep impression upon his sensitive mind. All the events of their varied careers were so stored up in his memory, that he could recall them at any time.

An anecdote is related illustrative of that conscientiousness of character which was early developed, and which subsequently gave him the name, throughout the whole breadth of the land, of "*Honest Abe.*" He had borrowed Ramsay's "*Life of Washington.*" By accident, the book was seriously injured by a shower. In consternation at the calamity, he took it back to the owner, and purchased the soiled copy by working for it for three days.

His father soon married again a very worthy woman, who had also several children. Abraham remained at home, toiling upon the farm, and occasionally working as a day-laborer. He had remarkable muscular strength and agility, was exceedingly genial

and obliging, and secured to an eminent degree the affection and respect of the lowly community with which he was associated. He was ever ready to make any sacrifice of his own comfort to assist others. Having some considerable mechanical skill, he built a boat to carry the produce of the farm down the Ohio River to a market. One morning, as he was standing by his boat at the landing, two men came down to the shore, and wished to be taken out to a steamer in the river. He sculled them out with their luggage. Each of them tossed a silver half-dollar to him. In telling this story in the day when his income was twenty-five thousand dollars a year, and he had obtained almost world-wide renown, he said, —

“I could scarcely believe my eyes. It was a most important incident in my life. I could scarcely believe that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. The world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was more hopeful and confident from that time.”

When nineteen years of age, a neighbor applied to him to take charge of a flat-boat to float a cargo of produce down the Ohio and the Mississippi to New Orleans, — a distance of more than a thousand miles. A more exciting trip for an adventurous young man can scarcely be imagined. Housed safely in his capacious boat, with food and shelter; floating down the tranquil current of the beautiful Ohio, and swept resistlessly along by the majestic flood of the Father of Waters; passing headlands and forests, huts and villages, the tortuous river bearing the boat in all directions, — north, south, east, west; the stream now compressed within narrow banks, and now expanding to a lake, and almost to an ocean; to be borne along by an insensible motion through such scenes, in the bright morning sunshine or in the serene moonlight, must have enkindled emotions in the bosom of young Lincoln never to be forgotten. With a rifle, and a small boat attached to their floating ark, they could supply themselves with game. Whenever they wished, they could tie their boat to the shore, and visit the cabins of the remote settlers for supplies.

One night, when tied to the shore, they were attacked by seven robbers eager for plunder. Quite a little battle ensued, when the robbers were put to precipitate flight. Having arrived at New Orleans, the cargo was sold, and the boat disposed of for lumber. Young Lincoln, with his companions, retraced their passage

back to Indiana in a long and weary journey, most of the way on foot.

As the years rolled on, the lot of this lowly family was the usual lot of humanity. There were joys and griefs, weddings and funerals. Abraham's sister Sarah, to whom he was tenderly attached, was married when a child of but fourteen years of age, and soon died. The family was gradually scattered. Mr. Thomas Lincoln, naturally restless, finding his location unhealthy in the almost unbroken wilderness of Spencer County, Ia., and lured by the accounts which he had heard of the marvellous fertility of Illinois, sold out his squatter's claim in 1830, and emigrated two hundred miles farther north-west, — to Macon County, Ill. It was a weary spring journey over swollen streams and through roads of mire. The teams, containing the personal effects of the emigrants, were dragged by oxen; and fifteen days were occupied in reaching their new home upon the banks of the Sangamon.

Abraham Lincoln was then twenty-one years of age. With vigorous hands, he aided his father in rearing another log-cabin. It was made of hewn timber. The only tools they had to work with were an axe, a saw, and a drawer-knife. A smoke-house and barn were also built, and ten acres of land were fenced in by split rails. Abraham worked diligently at this until he saw the family comfortably settled, and their small lot of enclosed prairie planted with corn; when he announced to his father his intention to leave home, and to go out into the world to seek his fortune. Little did he or his friends imagine how brilliant that fortune was to be. But the elements of greatness were then being developed. He saw the value of education, and was intensely earnest to improve his mind to the utmost of his power. He saw the ruin which ardent spirits were causing, and became strictly temperate; refusing to allow a drop of intoxicating liquor to pass his lips. And he had read in God's word, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" and a profane expression he was never heard to utter. Religion he revered. His morals were pure, and he was uncontaminated by a single vice.

It is difficult to explain the reason for the fact, that one young man, surrounded by every influence which should elevate, sinks into ruin; and that another, exposed to all the temptations which would naturally tend to degrade, soars to dignity and elevation which render him an honor to his race. Young Abraham worked



for a time as a hired laborer among the farmers. Then he went to Springfield, where he was employed in building a large flat-boat. In this he took a herd of swine, floated them down the Sangamon to the Illinois, and thence by the Mississippi to New Orleans. Whatever Abraham Lincoln undertook, he performed so faithfully as to give great satisfaction to his employers. In this adventure his employers were so well pleased, that, upon his return, they placed a store and a mill under his care. A blessing seemed to follow him. Customers were multiplied. His straightforward, determined honesty secured confidence. In settling a bill with a woman, he took six and quarter cents too much. He found it out in his night's reckoning, and immediately, in the dark, walked to her house, two miles and a half distant, to pay it back to her. Just as he was closing the store one night, in the dusk, he weighed out half a pound of tea for a woman. In the morning, he found, that, by an accidental defect in the scales, the woman had received scant weight by four ounces. He weighed out the four ounces, shut up the store, and carried them to her; a long walk before breakfast.

A bully came into the store one day, rioting, blustering, insulting beyond endurance, trying to provoke a fight. "Well, if you must be whipped," said Abraham at last, "I suppose I may as well whip you as any other man." He seized him with his long, powerful arms, threw him upon the ground as though he had been a child, and, gathering in his hand some "smart weed" which chanced to be near, rubbed it in his face, until the fellow belowed with pain, and cried for mercy. Abraham, with "malice towards none," helped him up, got some cool water to bathe his burning face, and made him ever after one of his best friends.

He borrowed an English grammar, studied it thoroughly, and completely mastered it. He sought the society of the most intelligent men in that region, joined a debating-club, and took "The Louisville Journal," which he not only read, but carefully pondered all its leading articles. Every leisure moment was devoted to study and thought.

In 1832, the celebrated Indian chief Black Hawk crossed the Mississippi, and, with a large band of savages, was ascending Rock River. Volunteers were called for to resist him. Lincoln, with enough others in his immediate neighborhood to make a company, enlisted. Who should be their captain? There were two candi-

dates, — Mr. Lincoln and a Mr. Kirkpatrick, a man of extensive influence, and who had been a former employer of Mr. Lincoln, but who was so arrogant and overbearing, that Mr. Lincoln could not live with him. The mode of election was very simple. The two candidates were placed apart, and each man was told to go to the one whom he preferred. Nearly the whole band was soon found clustered around Lincoln. This was with Mr. Lincoln the proudest hour of his life. The little army of twenty-four hundred ascended Rock River in pursuit of Black Hawk. The savages were attacked, routed, and Black Hawk was taken prisoner. Zachary Taylor was colonel, and Abraham Lincoln captain, in this campaign. Nothing seemed then more improbable than that either of those men should ever become President of the United States.

Upon his return to Sangamon County, he was proposed as a candidate for the State Legislature. He was then twenty-three years of age, and was the political admirer of Henry Clay, and not of Gen. Jackson. The great majority of the county were Jacksonian Democrats: but Mr. Lincoln's personal popularity was such, that he received almost every vote in his own precinct; though, in the general vote, he was defeated. He again tried his hand at store-keeping, and, with a partner, purchased a lot of goods. But his partner proved fickle and dissipated, and the adventure was a failure. He now received from Andrew Jackson the appointment of postmaster for New Salem. The duties were light, and the recompense small, in that wilderness. His only post-office was his hat. All the letters he received he carried there, ready to deliver as he chanced to meet those to whom they were addressed.

That new country was constantly demanding the services of a surveyor. Mr. Lincoln studied the science, and, entering upon the practice of this new profession, followed it vigorously and successfully for more than a year. He was still rapidly acquiring information, and advancing in mental culture. Shakspeare he read and re-read. Burns he could almost repeat by heart. Occasionally he ventured to make a political speech.

In 1834, he again became a candidate for the State Legislature, and was triumphantly elected. Mr. Stuart of Springfield, an eminent lawyer, advised him to study law; offering to lend him such assistance in money as he needed. He walked from New Salem

to Springfield, borrowed of Mr. Stuart a load of books, carried them upon his back to New Salem, and commenced his legal studies. With earnestness which absorbed every energy of his soul, he entered upon his student-life. He had no pleasant office, no choice library, none of the appliances of literary luxury, to entice him. Much of his time, his study was the shade of an oak-tree. When the legislature assembled, he trudged on foot, with his pack on his back, one hundred miles to Vandalia, then the capital of the State. He was a silent but studious member, gaining strength and wisdom every day. At the close of the session, he walked home, and resumed the study of the law, supporting himself by surveying. These years of thought and study had accomplished their work, and suddenly he flashed forth an orator. It was at a public meeting in Springfield that he electrified the audience, and was at once recognized as one of the most eloquent men in the State.

In 1836, he was re-elected to the State Legislature. Mr. Lincoln was now twenty-seven years of age, and a prominent man in the State of Illinois. It was during this session of the legislature that Mr. Lincoln first met Stephen A. Douglas, who was then but twenty-three years old. The slavery question was beginning to agitate the country. Both parties were bowing submissive to that great power. Some extreme proslavery resolutions passed the legislature. There were but two men who ventured to remonstrate. Abraham Lincoln was one. "Slavery," Mr. Lincoln said in his protest, which was entered upon the journal of the house, "is founded on both injustice and bad policy." He was still poor. He walked to Vandalia. He walked home; his only baggage, a bundle in his hand.

Major Stuart, of Springfield, now proposed that Mr. Lincoln should become his partner in the law; and accordingly, in April, 1839, he removed to Springfield, and commenced the practice of his new profession. In the mean time, the capital was removed to Springfield; and Mr. Lincoln, by successive elections, was continued in the legislature, and was soon recognized as its leading member on the Whig side. In the practice of the law, his success with the jury was so great, that he was engaged in almost every important case in the circuit.

Mr. Lincoln at once took a very high position at the bar. He would never advocate a cause which he did not believe to be a

just one, and no amount of odium or unpopularity could dissuade him from espousing a cause where he thought the right was with his client. Few lawyers were at that time willing to undertake the defence of any one who had helped a fugitive slave on his way to Canada. A man who was accused of that crime applied to one of the first lawyers in Springfield as his advocate. The lawyer declined, saying that he should imperil all his political prospects by undertaking the case. He then applied to an earnest anti-slavery man for advice. "Go," said he, "to Mr. Lincoln. He is not afraid of an unpopular cause. When I go for a lawyer to defend an arrested fugitive slave, other lawyers will refuse me; but, if Mr. Lincoln is at home, he will always take my case."

Judge Caton said of him, "His mode of speaking was generally of a plain and unimpassioned character; and yet he was the author of some of the most beautiful and eloquent passages in our language, which, if collected, would form a valuable contribution to American literature."

Judge Breeze, speaking of him after his death, said, "For my single self, I have, for a quarter of a century, regarded Mr. Lincoln as the finest lawyer I ever knew, and of a professional bearing so high-toned and honorable, as justly, and without derogating from the claims of others, entitling him to be presented to the profession as a model well worthy the closest imitation."

Judge Drummond's testimony is equally full and emphatic. He says, "With a voice by no means pleasant, and indeed, when excited, in its shrill tones sometimes almost disagreeable; without any of the personal graces of the orator; without much in the outward man indicating superiority of intellect; without quickness of perception, — still his mind was so vigorous, his comprehension so exact and clear, and his judgment so sure, that he easily mastered the intricacies of his profession, and became one of the ablest reasoners and most impressive speakers at our bar. With a probity of character known to all, with an intuitive insight into the human heart, with a clearness of statement which was itself an argument, with uncommon power and felicity of illustration, — often, it is true, of a plain and homely kind, — and with that sincerity and earnestness of manner which carried conviction, he was, perhaps, one of the most successful jury-lawyers we have ever had in the State. He always tried a case fairly and honestly. He never intentionally misrepresented the evidence of a witness



or the argument of an opponent. He met both squarely, and if he could not explain the one, or answer the other, substantially admitted it. He never misstated the law according to his own intelligent view of it."

At one time, Mr. Lincoln came very near being drawn into a duel very foolishly, but at the same time with a certain kind of characteristic magnanimity. A lady wrote a satirical poem in allusion to a young lawyer in Springfield, which some mischievous person took from her desk, and published in "The Journal." The lawyer, exasperated, called upon the editor, and demanded the name of the author. The editor was perplexed. It would seem ignoble to escape the responsibility by throwing it upon a lady. He consulted Mr. Lincoln, who was a personal friend of the lady. "Inform him," was the prompt reply, "that I assume the responsibility." A challenge was given and accepted. Mr. Lincoln chose broad-swords, intending to act simply on the defensive. Friends interposed; and the silly rencounter, which, had it resulted in the death of Mr. Lincoln, would have proved a great national calamity, was prevented.

In allusion to this event, Mr. Carpenter says, "Mr. Lincoln himself regarded the circumstance with much regret and mortification, and hoped it might be forgotten. In February preceding his death, a distinguished officer of the army called at the White House, and was entertained by the President and Mrs. Lincoln for an hour in the parlor. During the conversation, the gentleman said, turning to Mrs. Lincoln, 'Is it true, Mr. President, as I have heard, that you once went out to fight a duel for the sake of the lady by your side?' — 'I do not deny it,' replied Mr. Lincoln; 'but, if you desire my friendship, you will never mention the circumstance again.'"

In 1842, Mr. Lincoln married Miss Mary Todd, daughter of Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Ky., who had resided several years in Springfield. During the great political contest of 1844, Mr. Lincoln earnestly espoused the cause of his political idol, Henry Clay. In the canvass, he acquired much celebrity as an efficient speaker. His chagrin was intense that an intelligent people could prefer Mr. Polk to Mr. Clay. For a time, he mistrusted the capacity of the people for self-government, and resolved to have no more to do with politics.

In 1846, Mr. Lincoln was nominated from the Sangamon District

for Congress. He was elected by a very great majority, and in December, 1847, took his seat in the thirtieth Congress. During the same session, Stephen A. Douglas took his seat in the Senate. Mr. Douglas was one of the champions of the Democratic party in the Senate. Mr. Lincoln was the warm advocate of Whig principles in the House. He was opposed to the Mexican War, as "unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun by the President of the United States." A speech which he made on this subject was one of a very high order of ability. His clearness, directness, vigor of style, and oratorical impressiveness, are all remarkable. Speaking of President Polk's apologies for the war, he says, —

"I more than suspect that he is deeply conscious of being in the wrong; that he feels that the blood of this war, like the blood of Abel, is crying to Heaven against him; that he ordered Gen. Taylor into the midst of a peaceful Mexican settlement, purposely to bring on a war; that originally having some strong motive, which I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning, to involve the two nations in a war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by the extreme brightness of military glory, — that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood, that serpent's eye that charms to destroy, — he plunged into it, and swept on and on, till, disappointed in his calculations of the ease with which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where."

\* War and victories were then something new to the American people. Gen. Taylor was nominated in 1848 as the Whig candidate for the presidency. Gen. Cass was the Democratic candidate. Gen. Taylor had said, in accepting the nomination, —

"Upon the subject of the tariff, the currency, the improvement of our great highways, rivers, lakes, and harbors, the will of the people, as expressed through their representatives in Congress, ought to be respected and carried out by the Executive."

Mr. Lincoln, pithily and approvingly commenting upon this, said, "The people say to Gen. Taylor, 'If you are elected, shall we have a national bank?' He answers, 'Your will, gentlemen, not mine.' — 'What about the tariff?' — 'Say yourselves.' — 'Shall our rivers and harbors be improved?' — 'Just as you please. If you desire a bank, an alteration in the tariff, internal improvements, any or all, I will not hinder you; if you do not desire them, I will not attempt to force them on you. Send up your members to Con-

gress from the various districts, with opinions according to your own; and if they are for these measures, or any of them, I shall have nothing to oppose; if they are not for them, I shall not, by any appliances whatever, attempt to dragoon them into their accomplishment.'

"In a certain sense," Mr. Lincoln continued, "and to a certain extent, the President is a representative of the people. He is elected by them as Congress is. But can he, in the nature of things, know the wants of the people as well as three hundred other men coming from all the various localities of the nation? If so, where is the propriety of having Congress?"

This was the platform upon which Mr. Lincoln ever stood. It was understood that Gen. Taylor was opposed to the Mexican War. He certainly advocated an offensive instead of a defensive attitude. Mr. Lincoln cordially supported him in preference to Gen. Cass, the Democratic candidate. He advocated the Wilmot Proviso, which excluded slavery from the Territories. He prepared a bill which declared that no person *hereafter born* in the District of Columbia should be held a slave, and which also encouraged emancipation. At the same time, there is evidence, that, while his sympathies were strongly against slavery, he still *then* thought that slaves were recognized as property under the Constitution. Still he *afterwards* denied, in a controversy with Douglas, that the "right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution." At the close of his two years' term of service in Washington, he returned to Springfield, and assiduously devoted himself to the duties of his profession. He was always ready to advocate the cause of the poor and the oppressed, however small the remuneration, or great the obloquy incurred. The fugitive slave never appealed to him in vain.

In 1854, the proslavery party secured the abrogation of the Missouri Compromise, and thus threw open the whole of the North-west to the invasion of slavery. This outrage roused the indignation of Mr. Lincoln. He had long and anxiously watched the encroachments of slavery; and he now became convinced that there could be no cessation of the conflict until either slavery or freedom should gain the entire victory. Stephen A. Douglas, with whom Mr. Lincoln had long been more or less intimately associated, was responsible for the bill repealing the Missouri Compromise. It was regarded as his *bid* for Southern votes to secure the presidency.

Mr. Douglas was a man of great intellectual power, and of consummate tact and skill in debate. In October, 1854, he attended a State fair in Springfield, Ill., and addressed a vast assemblage in defence of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill as it was called. The next day, Mr. Lincoln replied to him, in a speech three hours in length. "The Springfield Republican," in its report, says, —

"He quivered with emotion. The whole house was still as death. He attacked the bill with unusual warmth and energy; and all felt that a man of strength was its enemy, and that he intended to blast it, if he could, by strong and manly efforts. He was most successful; and the house approved the glorious triumph of truth by long and loud continued huzzas. Women waved their handkerchiefs in token of woman's silent but heartfelt consent."

The fundamental principle of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was, that the *white people* in the Territories had a right to decide whether or not they would enslave the *colored people*. Thus pithily Mr. Lincoln replied to it: —

"My distinguished friend says it is an insult to the emigrants to Kansas and Nebraska to suppose that they are not able to govern themselves. We must not slur over an argument of this kind because it happens to tickle the ear. It must be met and answered. I admit that the emigrant to Kansas and Nebraska is competent to govern *himself*; but I deny his right to *govern any other person without that person's consent*."

It was the almost universal testimony, that, in this meeting at Springfield, Mr. Douglas was vanquished. Mr. Douglas went to Peoria. Mr. Lincoln followed him. The public excitement drew an immense crowd. Again these able and illustrious men met in the sternest conflict of argument. Mr. Lincoln's speech upon this occasion was fully reported. It was read with admiration all over the Union, and was generally considered an unanswerable refutation of the positions assumed by Mr. Douglass. One portion we will quote, since it has a direct bearing upon one of the questions now deeply exciting the public mind.

Mr. Douglas had assumed that it was a question of no importance whatever to the people of Illinois whether men were enslaved or not in the Territories. "I care not," he said, "whether slavery is voted up, or voted down, in Kansas."

Mr. Lincoln replied, "By the Constitution, each State has two senators; each has a number of representatives in proportion to



the number of its people; and each has a number of presidential electors equal to the whole number of its senators and representatives together.

"But, in ascertaining the number of the people for the purpose, five slaves are counted as being equal to three whites. The slaves do not vote. They are only counted, and so used as to swell the influence of the white people's vote. The practical effect of this is more aptly shown by a comparison of the States of South Carolina and Maine. South Carolina has six representatives, and so has Maine. South Carolina has eight presidential electors, and so has Maine. This is precise equality so far; and of course they are equal in senators, each having two.

"But how are they in the number of their white people? Maine has 581,513. South Carolina has 274,567. Maine has twice as many as South Carolina, and 32,679 over. Thus each white man in South Carolina is more than double any man in Maine. This is all because South Carolina, besides her free people, has 387,984 slaves."

It is now proposed that *all* these colored people, to whom South Carolina refuses the rights of freemen, should be counted in the representation, thus not only continuing but augmenting this inequality. If they are admitted to the rights of citizenship, then their votes will be thrown for such measures as they approve; but if they are denied the rights of citizens, and are yet counted in the representation, it more than doubles the political power of their former masters, and leaves the freedmen utterly helpless in their hands. In a letter which Mr. Lincoln wrote, Aug. 24, 1855, he says, —

"You inquire where I now stand. That is a disputed point. I think I am a Whig; but others say that there are no Whigs, and that I am an abolitionist. When I was in Washington, I voted for the Wilmot Proviso as good as forty times, and I never heard of any attempt to unwhig me for that. I do no more than oppose the *extension* of slavery. Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it, 'All men are created equal, except negroes.' I am not a Know-Nothing; that's certain. How could I be? How can any one, who abhors the oppression of the negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people? When the Know-Nothings get control, it

will read, 'All men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.' When it comes to that, I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty, — to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, without the base alloy of hypocrisy."

The new Republican party, embracing all of every name who were opposed to slavery extension, was now rising rapidly into power, and Mr. Lincoln cordially connected himself with it. He assisted in organizing the party in Illinois, and on the occasion made a speech, of which it was said, "Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence. Again and again, during the progress of its delivery, they sprang to their feet and upon the benches, and testified, by long-continued shouts and the waving of their hats, how deeply the speaker had wrought upon their minds and hearts."

Abraham Lincoln was now the most prominent man in the Republican party in all the West. His name was presented to the National Convention for the vice-presidency, to be placed upon the ticket with John C. Frémont; but Mr. Dayton was the successful competitor. During this campaign, he was rudely interrupted, in a glowing speech he was making, by some one crying out from the crowd, —

"Mr. Lincoln, is it true that you entered this State barefoot, driving a yoke of oxen?"

Mr. Lincoln paused for nearly a minute, while there was breathless silence, and then said very deliberately, "I think that I can prove the fact by at least a dozen men in this crowd, any one of whom is more respectable than the questioner." Then, resuming his impassioned strain as if he had not been interrupted, he said, "Yes, we will speak for freedom and against slavery as long as the Constitution of our country guarantees free speech; until everywhere on this wide land the sun shall shine, and the rain shall fall, and the wind shall blow, upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil."

The Missouri mob had now formed the Lecompton Constitution, imposing slavery upon Kansas; and the President had given it his sanction. The country was agitated as never before. Mr. Douglas had thrown open the North-west to the slave-power. It was capable of demonstration, that the Lecompton Constitution was not the act of the people of Kansas. Any thoughtful man could

have been assured that it would not secure the support of the people of the United States. The Silliman Memorial, to which we have referred, was exerting a wide influence; and conscientious men of all parties were denouncing the fraud. Under these circumstances, Mr. Douglas abandoned the base forgery, and took his stand upon the platform of the Silliman Memorial. The Democratic State Convention of Illinois indorsed his position. Still, Mr. Douglas had not changed his fundamental position. He still advocated the opening of the Territory, which had been consecrated to freedom, to the entrance of slavery; and he still would allow the white inhabitants of the Territory, in their constitution, to decide whether or not they would perpetuate the enslavement of the colored inhabitants. But he would not support the doings of an armed mob from Missouri, which had invaded Kansas, chosen a legislature, and framed a constitution. Upon this point, he broke away from Mr. Buchanan and his administration.

The Republicans of Illinois were not willing to send back to the Senate one who was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill; but Mr. Douglas was the recognized leader of the Democratic party in Illinois, and they rallied around him. The Republican State Convention met at Springfield on the 16th of June, 1858. Nearly one thousand delegates were present. Mr. Lincoln was unanimously nominated for the Senate in opposition to Mr. Douglas. In the evening, he addressed the convention at the State House. The following extracts will give some faint idea of this remarkable speech:—

“‘A house divided against itself cannot stand.’ I believe that this Government cannot endure permanently half-slave and half-free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall: but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all another. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

“In the notable argument of squatter sovereignty, otherwise called ‘sacred right of self-government,’ this latter phrase, though expressive of the only rightful basis of any government, is so perverted in this attempted use of it, as to amount to just this,—

that, if any one man choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object."

The campaign was now fairly opened. After one or two speeches, in which Mr. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln addressed the same audiences, but at different meetings, Mr. Lincoln, on the 24th of July, 1858, sent a proposition to Mr. Douglas that they should make arrangements to speak at the same meetings, dividing the time between them. The proposition was agreed to for seven towns. At the first, Mr. Douglas was to speak for an hour, and Mr. Lincoln for an hour and a half; then Mr. Douglas was to have the closing speech of half an hour. At the next, the time occupied was to be reversed. Thus they were to alternate until the close.

The first meeting was at Ottawa. Twelve thousand citizens had assembled. Mr. Douglas had the opening speech. The friends of Mr. Lincoln were roused to the greatest enthusiasm by his triumphant reply upon this occasion, and they almost literally bore him from the stage upon their shoulders. Immense crowds attended every meeting. Both speeches were carefully reported. The whole nation looked on with interest. The Republican party were so well pleased with Mr. Lincoln's success, that they published in one pamphlet the speeches on both sides, and circulated them widely as a campaign document. The verdict of the nation has been, that Mr. Lincoln was morally and intellectually the victor.

By an unfair apportionment of the legislative districts, Mr. Lincoln was beaten in his contest for a seat in the Senate; but, very unexpectedly to himself, he won a far higher prize. Mr. Lincoln made about sixty speeches during the canvass. When asked how he felt after his defeat, he replied characteristically, "I felt like the boy who had stubbed his toe,—too badly to laugh, and too big to cry."

Mr. Lincoln was now a man of national fame. He was recognized as one of the ablest statesmen and one of the most eloquent men in the nation. He was a good writer, an able debater, a man of well-disciplined mind, and extensive attainments in political science. In years long since past, he had helped to split rails to fence in a farm. Unwisely, the Republican party introduced this statesman and orator, and man of noble character, to the country as the "rail-splitter."



"It took years," says Mr. Holland, in his admirable "Life of Abraham Lincoln," "for the country to learn that Mr. Lincoln was not a boor. It took them years to unlearn what an unwise and boyish introduction of a great man to the public had taught them. It took years for them to comprehend the fact, that, in Mr. Lincoln, the country had the wisest, truest, gentlest, noblest, most sagacious President who had occupied the chair of state since Washington retired from it."

He visited Kansas, where he was received with boundless enthusiasm. He visited Ohio, and crowds thronged to hear him. His renown was now such, that he was invited to address the citizens of New York at the Cooper Institute. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity by the most distinguished men of that city of great names. Mr. Lincoln's address was a signal success. All were delighted. Round after round of applause greeted his telling periods. Mr. Bryant, in giving a report in "The Evening Post," said, "For the publication of such words of weight and wisdom as those of Mr. Lincoln, the pages of this journal are indefinitely elastic." The speech was published as a campaign document, and widely circulated. It might be called a scholarly performance. Its logic was faultless. In diction, it presented one of the finest specimens of pure Saxon English. Its illustrations and historic references indicated wide reading.

In New York, everybody was charmed with the artlessness, frankness, intelligence, and lovely character of the man. Invitations to speak were crowded upon him. He addressed immense audiences at Hartford, New Haven, Meriden, and Norwich. It was unquestionably greatly through his influence that the State of Connecticut that year gave a Republican majority. The ability which he displayed was very remarkable. A distinguished clergyman said, "I learned more of the art of public speaking, in listening to Mr. Lincoln's address last evening, than I could have learned from a whole course of lectures on rhetoric." A professor of rhetoric in Yale College took notes of his speech, and made them the subject of a lecture to his class the next day. He also followed Mr. Lincoln to his next appointment, that he might hear him again. "What was it?" inquired Mr. Lincoln of the Rev. Mr. Gulliver, who was complimenting him upon his speech, "which interested you so much?" The reply was, "It was the clearness

of your reasoning, and especially your illustrations, which were romance and pathos, and fun and logic, all welded together."

Alluding to the threats of the proslavery men that they would break up the Union should slavery be excluded from the Territories, he said, —

"In that supposed event, you say you will destroy the Union; and then you say the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us. That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, 'Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!' To be sure, what the robber demands of me — my money — was my own, and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own. And threat of death to me to extort my money, and threat of destruction to the Union to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle."

In conversation with Rev. Mr. Gulliver at this time, Mr. Lincoln said, in reply to the question, "What has your education been?" — "Well, as to education, the newspapers are correct. I never went to school more than six months in my life. I can say this,—that, among my earliest recollections, I remember how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at any thing else in my life; but that always disturbed my temper, and has ever since. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbors talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings.

"I could not sleep, although I often tried to, when I got on such a hunt after an idea, until I had caught it: and, when I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over; until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has stuck by me; for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it north, and bounded it south, and bounded it east, and bounded it west.

"But your question reminds me of a bit of education which I am bound in honesty to mention. In the course of my law-reading, I constantly came upon the word *demonstrate*. I thought, at first, that I understood its meaning, but soon became satisfied

that I did not. I said to myself, 'What do I mean when I *demonstrate*, more than when I *reason* or *prove*? How does *demonstration* differ from any other proof?' I consulted Webster's Dictionary. That told of 'certain proof,' 'proof beyond the possibility of doubt;' but I could form no sort of idea what sort of proof that was. I thought that a great many things were proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, without recourse to any such extraordinary process of reasoning as I understood *demonstration* to be.

"I consulted all the dictionaries and books of reference I could find, but with no better results. You might as well have defined *blue* to a blind man. At last, I said, 'Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer if you do not understand what *demonstrate* means;' and I left my situation in Springfield, went home to my father's house, and staid there until I could give any proposition in the six books of Euclid at sight. I then found out what *demonstrate* means, and went back to my law-studies."

The superintendent of the Five-points' Sabbath School relates the following incident in reference to Mr. Lincoln during his visit to that city: "One Sunday morning, I saw a tall, remarkable-looking man enter the room, and take a seat among us. He listened with fixed attention to our exercises; and his countenance expressed such a genuine interest, that I approached him, and suggested that he might be willing to say something to the children. He accepted the invitation with evident pleasure, and, coming forward, began a simple address, which at once fascinated every little hearer, and hushed the room into silence. His language was exceedingly beautiful, and his tones musical with intense feeling. The little faces would droop into sad conviction as he uttered sentences of warning, and would brighten into sunshine as he spoke cheerful words of promise. Once or twice he attempted to close his remarks; but the imperative shout of 'Go on! oh, do go on!' would compel him to resume. As I looked upon the gaunt and sinewy frame of the stranger, and marked his powerful head and determined features, now touched into softness by the impressions of the moment, I felt an irrepressible curiosity to learn something more about him; and, while he was quietly leaving the room, I begged to know his name. 'It is Abraham Lincoln, from Illinois.'"

The secessionists had now resolved, at all hazards, to break up

the Union. The great object was to find a plausible excuse. The real reason was, that the free States were increasing so rapidly, both in number and population, that the slave States could no longer retain the direction of the Government. They at that time had possession of the government, of the army, the navy, the treasury. They scattered the navy, dispersed the army, dismantled the forts and arsenals in the free States, accumulated arms and munitions of war in the slave States, and squandered the money in the treasury. They hoped thus to render the National Government impotent.

They declared, that, should the Republican party nominate, and elect to the presidency, a man who was opposed to slavery, they would break up the Union. They then did every thing in their power, in a treacherous and underhand way, to secure the election of a Republican President, that they might have this fancied excuse for their revolt. Future ages will scarcely credit these assertions; but no intelligent man at the present time will deny them.

In the spring of 1860, the Democratic party held its National Convention in Charleston, S. C., to nominate its candidate for the presidency. The proslavery men *bolted*, that they might break up the party, and thus secure the election of a Republican candidate. They succeeded. The regular Democratic Convention nominated Stephen A. Douglas. The secession party organized what they called a Constitutional Convention, and nominated John C. Breckenridge, one of the most radical of the proslavery men. A National Union Convention met, and nominated John Bell. This division rendered it almost certain that the Republican nominee, whoever he might be, would be elected. The secessionists were jovial, and pressed on in the preparation for decisive action.

The great Republican Convention met at Chicago on the 16th of June, 1860. The delegates and strangers who crowded the city amounted to twenty-five thousand. An immense building, called "The Wigwam," was reared to accommodate the Convention. There were eleven candidates for whom votes were thrown. William H. Seward, a man whose fame as a statesman had long filled the land, was the most prominent. It was generally supposed that he would be the nominee. On the first ballot, Mr. Seward received one hundred and seventy-three and a half votes, and



Abraham Lincoln one hundred and two. Nearly all the votes were now concentrated upon these two candidates. Upon the second ballot, Mr. Seward received one hundred and eighty-four and a half votes, and Mr. Lincoln one hundred and eighty-one. And now came the third ballot, which, it was very evident, would be decisive. Abraham Lincoln received two hundred and thirty-one and a half votes, lacking but one vote and a half of an election. Immediately one of the delegates from Ohio rose, and transferred the four votes of Ohio to Mr. Lincoln. This gave him the nomination. We cannot better describe the scene which ensued than in the language of Mr. Holland : —

“The excitement had culminated. After a moment’s pause, like the sudden and breathless stillness that precedes the hurricane, the storm of wild, uncontrollable, and almost insane enthusiasm, descended. The scene surpassed description. During all the ballotings, a man had been standing upon the roof, communicating the results to the outsiders, who, in surging masses, far outnumbered those who were packed into the Wigwam. To this man one of the secretaries shouted, ‘Fire the salute ! Abe Lincoln is nominated !’ Then, as the cheering inside died away, the roar began on the outside, and swelled up from the excited masses, like the voice of many waters. This the insiders heard, and to it they replied. Thus deep called to deep with such a frenzy of sympathetic enthusiasm, that even the thundering salute of cannon was unheard by many on the platform.”

When this burst of enthusiasm had expended itself, it was moved that the nomination should be unanimous ; and it was made so. Mr. Lincoln was at this time at Springfield, two hundred miles distant, anxiously awaiting the result of the ballotings. He was in the office of “*The Springfield Journal*,” receiving the telegraphic despatches. At last a messenger came in with a despatch in his hand, and announced, —

“The Convention has made a nomination, and Mr. Seward is — the second man on the list.”

The joyful scene which ensued with Mr. Lincoln’s friends must be imagined. When the excitement had a little subsided, he said, “There is a little woman on Eighth Street who has some interest in this matter ;” and, putting the telegram into his pocket, he walked home. Little did he then dream of the weary years of toil and care, and the bloody death, to which that telegram doomed him ;

and as little did he dream that he was to render services to his country, which would fix upon him the eyes of the whole civilized world, and which would give him a place in the affections and reverence of his countrymen, second only, if second, to that of Washington.

The following day, a committee of the Convention waited upon him with the announcement of his nomination. As it was known that they were to come, some of Mr. Lincoln's friends sent in several hampers of wine for their entertainment. But he was not only a temperance man, but a "total-abstinence" man. Resolved not to allow that new temptation to induce him to swerve from his principles, he returned the gift with kindest words of gratitude for the favor intended.

Mr. Lincoln received the delegation at the door of his house, and conducted them into his parlor. Gov. Morgan of New York, in appropriate phrase, informed him that he had been unanimously nominated by the Convention to the office of President of the United States, and asked permission to report his acceptance. At the close of the ceremony, Mr. Lincoln said, in substance, —

"As a suitable conclusion of an interview so important, courtesy requires that I should treat the committee with something to drink." Then, stepping to the door, he called "Mary, Mary!" A young girl responded to the call. He said a few words to her in a low tone of voice, and closed the door. In a few moments, the girl entered, bringing a large waiter containing a pitcher and several tumblers, which she placed upon a centre-table. Mr. Lincoln then rose, and said, —

"Gentlemen, we must pledge our mutual healths in the most healthy beverage which God has given to man. It is the only beverage I have ever used or allowed in my family; and I cannot conscientiously depart from it on this occasion. It is pure Adam's ale, from the spring."

Taking a tumbler, he touched it to his lips; and all his guests followed his example. The President subsequently related the following singular incident as having taken place at that time: —

"A very singular occurrence took place the day I was nominated at Chicago, of which I am reminded to-night. In the afternoon of the day, returning home from down town, I went up stairs to Mrs. Lincoln's sitting-room. Feeling somewhat tired, I lay down upon a couch in the room, directly opposite a bureau, upon

which was a looking-glass. As I reclined, my eye fell upon the glass, and I saw distinctly *two* images of myself, exactly alike, except that one was a little paler than the other. I arose, and lay down again with the same result. It made me quite uncomfortable for a few moments; but, some friends coming in, the matter passed out of my mind.

"The next day, while walking in the street, I was suddenly reminded of the circumstance; and the disagreeable sensation produced by it returned. I determined to go home, and place myself in the same position; and, if the same effect was produced, I would make up my mind that it was the natural result of some principle of refraction or optics which I did not understand, and dismiss it. I tried the experiment with a like result; and, as I said to myself, accounting for it on some principle unknown to me, it ceased to trouble me.

"But, some time ago, I tried to produce the same effect *here* by arranging a glass and couch in the same position, without effect. My wife was somewhat worried about it. She thought it was a *sign* that I was to be elected to a second term of office, and that the paleness of one of the faces was an omen that I should not see life through the second term."

At the time of his nomination, Mr. Lincoln was fifty-two years of age. There was then but little doubt that he would be elected. Crowds flocked to pay their homage to one, who, as President, would soon have so immense a patronage at his disposal. It became necessary that a room should be set apart in the State House for his receptions. From morning till night, he was busy. In looking over a book which his friends had prepared, and which contained the result of a careful canvass of the city of Springfield, showing how each man would vote, he was surprised and greatly grieved to find that most of the ministers were against him. As he closed the book, he said sadly, —

"Here are twenty-three ministers of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian; God knows, I would be one: but I have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this book. These men well know that I am for freedom in the Territories, freedom everywhere as far as the Constitution and laws will permit; and that my opponents are for slavery. They know this; and yet with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage cannot live

a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand this."

Then, after a moment's pause, he added, "Doesn't it appear strange that men can ignore the moral aspects of this contest? A revelation could not make it plainer to me that slavery or the Government must be destroyed. It seems as if God had borne with this slavery until the very teachers of religion have come to defend it from the Bible, and to claim for it a divine character and sanction; and now the cup of iniquity is full, and the vials of wrath will be poured out."

The election-day came. Mr. Lincoln received a hundred and eighty electoral votes; Mr. Douglas, twelve; Mr. Breckenridge, seventy-two; Mr. Bell, thirty-nine. The result of the election was known early in November. Nearly four months would transpire before the 4th of March, 1861, when he was to enter upon his term of office.

The spirit manifested by the slaveholders on this occasion is fairly developed in the following article contained in "The Richmond Examiner" of April 23, 1861:—

"The capture of Washington City is perfectly within the power of Virginia and Maryland, if Virginia will only make the effort by her constituted authorities; nor is there a single moment to lose. The entire population pant for the onset. There never was half the unanimity among the people before, nor a tithe of the zeal upon any subject, that is now manifested to take Washington, and drive from it every black Republican who is a dweller there.

"From the mountain-tops and valleys to the shores of the sea, there is one wild shout of fierce resolve to capture Washington City at all and every human hazard. That filthy cage of unclean birds must and will assuredly be purified by fire. The people are determined upon it, and are clamorous for a leader to conduct them to the onslaught. The leader will assuredly arise; ay, and that right speedily.

"It is not to be endured that this flight of abolition harpies shall come down from the black North for their roosts in the heart of the South, to defile and brutalize the land. They come as our enemies. They act as our most deadly foes. They promise us bloodshed and fire; and that is the only promise they have ever redeemed. The fanatical yell for the immediate subjugation of the whole South is going up hourly from the united voices of all the



North ; and, for the purpose of making their work sure, they have determined to hold Washington City as the point whence to carry on their brutal warfare.

“ Our people can take it ; they *will* take it ; and Scott the arch-traitor, and Lincoln the beast, combined, cannot prevent it. The just indignation of an outraged and deeply-injured people will teach the Illinois ape to repeat his race, and retrace his journey across the border of the free negro States still more rapidly than he came ; and Scott the traitor will be given the opportunity at the same time to try the difference between ‘ Scott’s Tactics ’ and the ‘ Shanghae Drill ’ for quick movements.

“ Great cleansing and purification are needed, and will be given to that festering sink of iniquity, that wallow of Lincoln and Scott, — the desecrated city of Washington ; and many indeed will be the carcasses of dogs and caitiffs that will blacken the air upon the gallows before the great work is accomplished. So let it be ! ”

One naturally pauses to inquire the cause of all this wrath ; and no one can refrain from being amused to find that it was simply that a majority of the nation were opposed to the extension of slavery into the Territories, and that that majority had constitutionally elected as President one of the best and most eminent men in the nation, who was pledged to oppose, so far as he constitutionally could, slavery-extension. Again and again, Mr. Lincoln had declared, and so had the party which elected him, that he had no right to interfere with slavery in the States ; that the compromises of the Constitution left that question with each State ; and that he had no power to touch the domestic institutions of the States, except as a war-measure, in the case of war, to save the nation from ruin.

On Mr. Lincoln’s journey to Washington, he made numerous addresses to the multitudes who thronged to greet him. At Cincinnati, a large number of Kentuckians were present. He said to them in a playful way, —

“ You perhaps want to know what we will do with you. I will tell you, so far as I am authorized to speak. We mean to treat you, as near as we possibly can, as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison treated you. We mean to leave you alone, and in no way to interfere with your institutions ; to abide by all and every compromise of the Constitution ; in a word, coming back to the

original proposition, to treat you, as far as degenerate men (if we have degenerated) may, according to the examples of those noble fathers, Washington, Jefferson, and Madison. We mean to remember that you are as good as we; that there is no difference between us other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to recognize and bear in mind always that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as good as we claim to have; and treat you accordingly."

At Buffalo he said, "Your worthy mayor has thought fit to express the hope that I shall be able to relieve the country from the present, or, I should say, the threatened difficulties. I am sure that I bring a heart true to the work. For the ability to perform it, I trust in that Supreme Being who has never forsaken this favored land. Without that assistance, I shall surely fail; with it, I cannot fail."

At Philadelphia, where he was received with the greatest enthusiasm, he gave utterance to the following noble sentiments: "I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother-land, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to the world for all future time. It was that which gave promise, that, in due time, the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This was a sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on this basis? If it can, I shall consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help save it; if it cannot be saved on that principle, it will be truly awful. But, if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated upon this spot than surrender it. Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there need be no bloodshed or war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course; and I may say in advance, that there will be no bloodshed unless it be forced upon the Government, and then it will be compelled to act in self-defence."

At Harrisburg, where there was a large military display, he remarked, "While I am exceedingly gratified to see the manifestation in your streets of the military force here, and exceedingly gratified at your promise here to use that force upon a proper

emergency, I desire to repeat, to preclude any possible misconstruction, that I do most sincerely hope that we shall have no use for them; that it will never become their duty to shed blood, and most especially never to shed fraternal blood. I promise, that, so far as I may have wisdom to direct, if so painful a result shall in any wise be brought about, it shall be through no fault of mine."

In South Carolina, four days after the election, a bill was introduced into the legislature, calling out ten thousand volunteers; her two senators in congress resigned their seats; and a convention was called to pass an act of secession. The rebels had made their preparations for vigorous action. They had nothing to fear from Mr. Buchanan, and their object was to get their strength consolidated before Mr. Lincoln should come into power.

On the 27th of December, 1860, Fort Moultrie and Castle Pinckney were seized, and the revenue-cutter "William Aikin" taken possession of at Charleston. Three days after, the arsenal was seized. On the 2d of January, 1861, Fort Macon in North Carolina, and the arsenal at Fayetteville, fell into the hands of the rebels. On the 3d, an armed mob from Georgia took possession of Forts Pulaski and Jackson, and the arsenal at Savannah. The next day, the 4th, Fort Morgan, and the arsenal at Mobile, were seized by a band of Alabamians. On the 8th, Forts Johnson and Caswell, at Smithville, N. C., were captured, without a struggle, by the rebels. The next day, the 9th, "The Star of the West," an unarmed steamer bearing supplies to the garrison in Fort Sumter, was fired upon by a rebel battery, and driven back. On the 12th, Fort M'Rae, Fort Barrancas, and the navy-yard at Pensacola, in Florida, were taken possession of by the rebels. The day before, armed gangs in Louisiana seized Forts Pike, St. Philip, and Jackson, and the arsenal at Baton Rouge.

These United-States forts had cost the National Government \$5,947,000; were pierced for 1,091 guns, and adapted for a war garrison of 5,430 men. Mr. Buchanan did not lift a finger to arrest or to resent these outrages.

On the 17th of December, the convention in South Carolina declared the Union dissolved, and that South Carolina was a free, sovereign, and independent State. This act was speedily imitated by several other slave States. The rapidly-recurring scenes of these days of darkness and gloom we have not space here to describe. The air was filled with rumors that President Lincoln

was to be assassinated on his journey to Washington. In taking leave of his friends at the depot in Springfield, he said, in a speech full of tenderness and pathos, —

“My friends, no one not in my position can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is perhaps greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him. In the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support; and I hope that my friends will all pray that I may receive that divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. Again I bid you all an affectionate farewell.”

In every city through which he passed, he was greeted with enthusiasm perhaps never before equalled in the United States. It was evident, however, that the secessionists were seeking his life. At one time, an attempt was made to throw the train off the track. At Cincinnati, a hand-grenade was found concealed upon the train. A gang in Baltimore had arranged, upon his arrival, to “get up a row,” and, in the confusion, to make sure of his death with revolvers and hand-grenades. A detective unravelled the plot. A secret and special train was provided to take him from Harrisburg, through Baltimore, at an unexpected hour of the night. The train started at half-past ten; and, to prevent any possible communication on the part of the secessionists with their Confederate gang in Baltimore, as soon as the train had started, the telegraph-wires were cut.

Mr. Lincoln took a sleeping-car, and passed directly through Baltimore to Washington, where he arrived at half-past six o'clock in the morning. His safe arrival was immediately telegraphed over the country. Great anxiety was felt in reference to the inauguration-day. Washington was full of traitors. Slavery had so debauched the conscience in the slaveholding States, that the assassination of a man who did not believe in slavery was scarce deemed a crime.

The week of the inauguration was one of the greatest peril and anxiety the nation had ever experienced. The air was filled with rumors of conspiracies. It was well known that there were



thousands of desperate men, resolved by tumult and murder to prevent the inauguration, and then to seize the capital. Multitudes of strange-looking men thronged the streets of Washington, armed with bowie-knives and revolvers.

The morning of the 4th of March dawned serene and beautiful. Even at an early hour, Pennsylvania Avenue presented such a mass of human beings as had never crowded it before. At nine o'clock, the procession moved from the White House. It was very imposing. A triumphal car, magnificently draped, emblematic of the Constitution, bore thirty-four very beautiful young girls, picturesquely dressed, as representatives of the several States; none being recognized as having seceded.

Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Lincoln rode side by side in the same carriage. They ascended the long flight of steps of the Capitol arm-in-arm. It was observed that Mr. Buchanan looked pale and anxious, and that he was nervously excited. Mr. Lincoln's face was slightly flushed, his lips compressed; and his countenance wore an expression of great firmness and seriousness. Gen. Scott, in his *Autobiography*, says, —

“The inauguration of President Lincoln was perhaps the most critical and hazardous event with which I have ever been connected. In the preceding two months, I had received more than fifty letters, many from points distant from each other, some earnestly dissuading me from being present at the event, and others distinctly threatening assassination if I dared to protect the ceremony by military force.”

But for the formidable military display, there would unquestionably have been tumult and assassination. Gen. Scott called out the Washington Volunteers; brought from a distance two batteries of horse-artillery, with detachments of cavalry and infantry, all regulars. The volunteers escorted the President, while the regulars flanked the movement, marching in parallel streets. A fine company of sappers and miners led the advance. It was under this imposing array of cannon and bayonets that it was necessary to conduct the legally-chosen President of the United States to his inauguration.

Mr. Lincoln took his stand upon the platform of the eastern portico of the Capitol. Thirty thousand persons stood before him. There were many sharpshooters, who, from the distance of nearly a mile, could throw a bullet into his heart. It is hardly too

much to say, that the *nation* trembled. Mr. Lincoln unrolled a manuscript, and in a clear voice, which seemed to penetrate with its distinct articulation the remotest ear, read his inaugural. We have not space for the whole of this noble document.

"Apprehension," said he, "seems to exist among the people of the Southern States, that, by the accession of a Republican administration, their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches, when I declare that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so; and I have no inclination to do so. Those who nominated and elected me did so with the full knowledge that I had made this and made many similar declarations, and had never recanted them; and, more than this, they placed in the platform, for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:—

"*Resolved*, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes.'

"I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration.

"I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States, when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause, as cheerfully to one section as to another.

"A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted. I hold, that, in the contemplation of

universal law and of the Constitution, the union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert, that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever; it being impossible to destroy it, except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

“Again: if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of a contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it, — break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it? Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition, that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual, confirmed by the history of the Union itself.

“The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association, in 1774. It was matured and continued in the Declaration of Independence, in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of the Confederation, in 1778; and finally, in 1778, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was to form a more perfect union. But, if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before; the Constitution having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

“It follows from these views, that no State, upon its own mere motion, can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

“I therefore consider, that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and, to the extent of my ability, I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union shall be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this, which I deem to be only a simple duty on my part, I shall perfectly perform it, so far as is practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the

requisition, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary.

"I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union, that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself.

"The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and collect the duties and imposts; but, beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere.

"All the vital rights of minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guaranties and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them; but no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by National, or by State authorities? The Constitution does not expressly say. Must Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities.

"If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the Government must cease. There is no alternative for continuing the Government but acquiescence on the one side or the other. If a minority in such a case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent, which, in turn, will ruin and divide them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such a minority: for instance, why not any portion of a new confederacy, a year or two hence, arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this. Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new Union as to produce harmony only, and prevent secession? Plainly the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy.

"One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended; while the other believes it is wrong, and



ought not to be extended. And this is the only substantial dispute. Physically speaking, we cannot separate; we cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendment, I fully recognize the full authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it.

"My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time.

"If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it.

"Such of you as are now dissatisfied still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either.

"If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there is still no single reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on

Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulties.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you.

"You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government; while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend' it.

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break, our bonds of affection.

"The mystic cords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

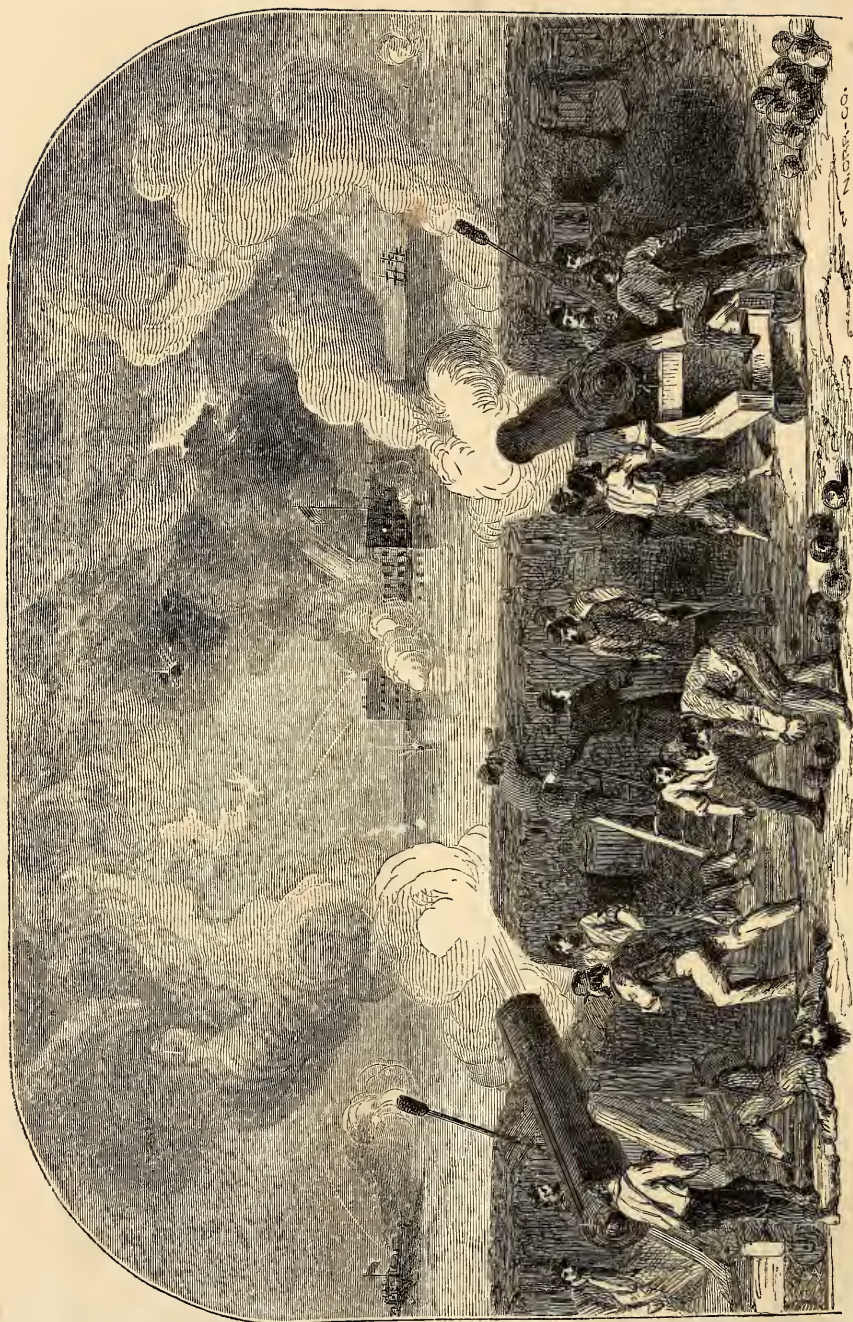
At the close of this solemn and imposing scene, Mr. Lincoln was escorted back to the White House, where Mr. Buchanan took leave of him. He was asked if he felt alarmed at any time while reading his address. His reply was, that he had often experienced greater fear in speaking to a dozen Western men on the subject of temperance.

And now commenced his life of care and toil and sorrow, to terminate in a bloody death. Mr. Lincoln's conciliatory words had no softening influence upon the hearts of the secessionists. They knew that it was only by violence and revolution that they could so strengthen the institution of slavery as to make it permanent upon this continent; and they still believed that the North would yield to their demands, rather than appeal to the dreadful arbitrament of the sword. "The Yankees," said one of their speakers, "are a cowardly race, and I will pledge myself to hold in the hollow of my hand and to drink every drop of blood that will be shed."

The demon of rebellion was unappeased. Treason was everywhere. Openly avowed traitors to the Union were in every department of the Government. No step could be taken, and there could be no deliberation, which was not immediately reported to the rebels. Seven States were now in revolt. There were seven other slave States, which it was absolutely necessary the secessionists should secure in order to have any chance of









success. On the 12th of April, the rebels in Charleston opened fire upon Fort Sumter. This introduced the war.

The rebels were so infatuated as to anticipate an easy victory. They had already inaugurated their government at Montgomery. Elated with the news of the bombardment and capture of Fort Sumter, Mr. Walker, the rebel Secretary of War, addressing the shouting throng, said, —

“No man can tell where this war, commenced this day, will end; but I will prophesy that the flag which now flaunts the breeze here will float over the dome of the old Capitol at Washington before the 1st of May. Let them try Southern chivalry, and test the extent of Southern resources, and it may float eventually over Faneuil Hall itself.”

With wonderful unanimity, the North rallied around the imperilled flag of the nation. The rebels crushed out all opposition to secession within their borders, and forced every available man into the ranks. Mr. Lincoln, three days after the capture of Sumter, issued a proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand troops to defend the national capital, which the rebels threatened to seize; and soon after he declared the ports in the rebellious States under blockade.

In an evil hour, Virginia joined the rebels. Terrible was her punishment. Mr. Douglas nobly came forward, and gave all of his strong influence to Mr. Lincoln. As he read the President's proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand men, he said, —

“Mr. President, I cordially concur in every word of that document, except that, in the call for seventy-five thousand men; I would make it two hundred thousand. You do not know the dishonest purposes of those men as well as I do.”

On the 1st of May, Senator Douglas addressed an immense gathering in the city of Chicago. Ten thousand persons thronged the Wigwam. The eloquent senator spoke in strains which thrilled the heart of the nation. “I beg you to believe,” said he, “that I will not do you or myself the injustice to think that this magnificent ovation is personal to myself. I rejoice to know that it expresses your devotion to the Constitution, the Union, and the flag of our country. I will not conceal my gratification at the incontrovertible test this vast audience presents, — that whatever political differences or party questions may have divided us, yet you all had a conviction, that, when the country should be in danger,

my loyalty could be relied on. That the present danger is imminent, no man can conceal. If war must come, if the bayonet must be used to maintain the Constitution; I say before God, my conscience is clean. I have struggled long for a peaceful solution of the difficulty. I have not only tendered those States what was their right, but I have gone to the very extreme of magnanimity.

"The return we receive is war, armies marched upon our capital, obstruction and danger to our navigation, letters of marque to invite pirates to prey upon our commerce, and a concerted movement to blot out the United States of America from the map of the globe. The question is, 'Are we to maintain the country of our fathers, or allow it to be stricken down by those, who, when they can no longer govern, threaten to destroy?'

"What cause, what excuse, do disunionists give us for breaking up the best government on which the sun of heaven ever shed its rays? They are dissatisfied with the result of the presidential election. Did they never get beaten before? Are we to resort to the sword when we get beaten at the ballot-box? I understand it that the voice of the people, expressed in the mode appointed by the Constitution, must command the obedience of every citizen. They assume, on the election of a particular candidate, that their rights are not safe in the Union. What evidence do they present of this? I defy any man to show any act on which it is based. What act has been omitted to be done? I appeal to these assembled thousands, that, so far as the constitutional rights of slaveholders are concerned, nothing has been done, and nothing omitted, of which they can complain.

"There has never been a time, from the day that Washington was inaugurated first President of these United States, when the rights of the Southern States stood firmer under the laws of the land than they do now; there never was a time when they had not as good cause for disunion as they have to-day. What good cause have they now, which has not existed under every administration?

"If they say the territorial question, now, for the first time, there is no act of Congress prohibiting slavery anywhere. If it be the non-enforcement of the laws, the only complaints I have heard have been of the too vigorous and faithful fulfillment of the Fugitive-slave Law. Then what reason have they? The slavery question is a mere excuse. The election of Lincoln is a

mere pretext. The present secession movement is the result of an enormous conspiracy formed more than a year since, formed by leaders in the Southern Confederacy more than twelve months ago.

"But this is no time for the detail of causes. The conspiracy is now known. Armies have been raised, war is levied, to accomplish it. There are only two sides to the question. Every man must be for the United States or against it. There can be no neutrals in this war; only *patriots* or *traitors*."

We have no space here to enter into the details of the war which ensued, which cost half a million of lives, and an expenditure of treasure and a destruction of property which cannot be computed. On the 6th of March, 1862, Mr. Lincoln recommended that the United States should co-operate with any State "which may gradually adopt abolishment of slavery, by giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used at its discretion to compensate for inconveniences, public and private, produced by such changes of system."

The rebels were continually cheered by the hope that all the border States would join them. Mr. Lincoln invited the representatives of those States to a conference with him, in which he said to them, urging them to accept emancipation with compensation,—

"Let the States which are in rebellion see definitely and certainly, that in no event will the States you represent ever join their proposed confederacy, and they cannot much longer maintain the contest. Can you, for your States, do better than take the course I urge? The incidents of war cannot be avoided. If the war continue long, the institution in your States will be extinguished by mere friction and abrasion. It will be gone, and you will have nothing valuable in lieu of it. Much of its value is gone already. How much better for you and your people to take the step which at once shortens the war, and secures substantial compensation for that which is sure to be wholly lost in any other event! How much better thus to save the money, which else we sink forever in the war!"

The border-State men were blind and obdurate. Two acts, by Mr. Lincoln's recommendation, were soon passed by Congress. One confiscated the slaves of masters who were in open rebellion: the other abolished slavery in the District of Columbia.

He was urged to issue a proclamation of emancipation, before, in his judgment, the country was prepared for it. He replied, "I do

not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet."

At length, he judged that the hour for decisive action had come; and on Monday, Sept. 22, 1862, Mr. Lincoln issued his renowned proclamation, declaring that on the 1st of January, 1863, all the slaves in States then continuing in rebellion should be free.

In cabinet-meeting, he said to Mr. Chase, "I made a solemn vow before God, that, if Gen. Lee should be driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves."

The excitement which this proclamation created was intense; many applauding, many condemning. In a brief address which he soon made, he said, "What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under a heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God that I have made no mistake." Two years after, he was enabled to say, "As affairs have turned, it is the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century."

President Lincoln gives the following account of the draughting of the proclamation, and the discussion in the cabinet respecting it:—

"It had got to be midsummer, 1862. Things had gone on from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of our rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we had about played our last card, and must change our tactics, or lose the game. I now determined upon the adoption of the emancipation policy; and, without consultation with or the knowledge of the cabinet, I prepared the original draught of the proclamation, and, after much anxious thought, called a cabinet-meeting upon the subject. This was the last of July, or the first part of the month of August, 1862.

"This cabinet-meeting took place, I think, upon a Saturday. All were present, except Mr. Blair, the Postmaster-General, who was absent at the opening of the discussion, but came in subsequently. I said to the cabinet that I had resolved upon this step, and had not called them together to ask their advice, but to lay the subject-matter of a proclamation before them, suggestions as to which would be in order after they had heard it read.

"Various suggestions were offered. Secretary Chase wished the language stronger in reference to the arming of the blacks.



Mr. Blair, after he came in, deprecated the policy, on the ground that it would cost the Administration the fall elections. Nothing, however, was offered that I had not already fully anticipated, and settled in my own mind, until Secretary Seward spoke. He said in substance, —

“‘Mr. President, I approve of the proclamation; but I question the expediency of its issue at this juncture. The depression of the public mind, consequent upon our repeated reverses, is so great, that I fear the effect of so important a step. It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhausted Government, — a cry for help; the Government stretching forth her hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands to the Government.’

“His idea was,” said Mr. Lincoln, “that it would be considered our last shriek on the retreat. ‘Now,’ continued Mr. Seward, ‘while I approve the measure, I suggest, sir, that you postpone its issue until you can give it to the country supported by military success, instead of issuing it, as would be the case now, upon the greatest disasters of the war.’

“The wisdom of the view of the Secretary of State struck me with great force. It was an aspect of the case, that, in all my thought upon the subject, I had entirely overlooked. The result was, that I put the draught of the proclamation aside, waiting for a victory. From time to time, I added or changed a line, touching it up here and there, anxiously watching the progress of events. Well, the next news we had was of Pope’s disaster at Bull Run. Things looked darker than ever. Finally came the week of the battle at Antietam. I determined to wait no longer. The news came, I think, on Wednesday, that the advantage was on our side. I was then staying at the Soldiers’ Home, three miles out of Washington. Here I finished writing the second draught of the preliminary proclamation; came up on Saturday; called the cabinet together to hear it; and it was published the following Monday.”

At this final meeting, which took place on the 20th of September, as Mr. Lincoln read the words, “And the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will *recognize* the freedom of such persons,” Mr. Seward interrupted him, saying, —

“I think, Mr. President, that you should insert after the word *recognize*, in that sentence, the words *and maintain*.”

The President replied, that he had already considered the im-

port of that expression in that connection, but that he had refrained from inserting it, as he did not like to promise that which he was not *sure* that he could perform. "But Mr. Seward," said the President, "insisted; and the words went in." It so happened that there were just one hundred days between the preliminary proclamation which was issued on the 22d of September, 1862, and the final proclamation which consummated the act of emancipation.

On the 1st of January, 1863, the final proclamation was issued. In his preamble, he alluded to his previous proclamation of promise, and then said, "Now therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me invested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war-measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States, and parts of States, wherein the people thereof respectively are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following; to wit."

Then follows a list of the States in rebellion. "And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare, that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforth shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons."

The proclamation is concluded with the following words: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

Of this proclamation "The London Spectator" says, "We cannot read it without a renewed conviction that it is the noblest political document known to history, and should have for the nation, and the statesmen he left behind him, something of a sacred and almost prophetic character. Surely none was ever written under a stronger sense of the reality of God's government; and

certainly none written in a period of passionate conflict ever so completely excluded the partiality of victorious faction, and breathed so pure a strain of mingled justice and mercy."

The country abounded with spies and informers; and, as another measure of military necessity, the writ of *habeas corpus* was suspended. The President issued a circular letter to the army, urging the observance of the Lord's Day, and reverence for the name of God. Sunday desecration, and profanity, are ever two great evils in an army.

At one time, twenty-four deserters were sentenced by court-martial to be shot. Mr. Lincoln refused to sign the warrants for their execution. An officer said to him, "Mr. President, unless these men are made an example of, the army itself is in danger. Mercy to the few is cruelty to the many." Mr. Lincoln replied, "Mr. General, there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. Don't ask me to add to their number; for I will not do it."

A petition was brought to him to pardon a man who had been convicted of being engaged in the slave-trade. He read it carefully, and then said to the one who brought the petition,—

"My friend, that is a very touching appeal to our feelings. You know my weakness is to be, if possible, too easily moved by appeals to mercy. If this man were guilty of the foulest murder that the arm of man could perpetrate, I could forgive him on such an appeal; but the man who could go to Africa, and rob her of her children, and sell them into interminable bondage, with no other motive than that which is furnished by dollars and cents, is so much worse than the most depraved murderer, that he can never receive pardon at my hands."

A lady, the wife of a captured rebel officer, came to Mr. Lincoln, and pleaded tearfully for the release of her husband. In her plea, gushing from a woman's loving heart, she urged that her husband was a very religious man. Mr. Lincoln's feelings were so moved by the grief of the wife, that he released the rebel. He, however, remarked,—

"You say that your husband is a religious man. Tell him that I say that I am not much of a judge of religion; but that, in my opinion, the religion that sets men to rebel and fight against their government, because, as they think, that government does not sufficiently help some men to eat their bread in the sweat of

other men's faces, is not the sort of religion upon which men can get to heaven."

The fearful trials of his office developed very rapidly Mr. Lincoln's religious nature. "I have been driven," he said, "many times to my knees, by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for that day. I should be the most presumptuous blockhead upon this footstool, if I for one day thought that I could discharge the duties which have come upon me since I came into this place, without the aid and enlightenment of One who is wiser and stronger than all others."

Mr. Carpenter, a distinguished artist who spent six months almost constantly in the society of the President, says of him, —

"Absorbed in his papers, he would become unconscious of my presence, while I intently studied every line and shade of expression in that furrowed face. In repose, it was the saddest face I ever knew. There were days when I could scarcely look into it without crying. During the first week of the battles of the Wilderness, he scarcely slept at all. Passing through the main hall of the domestic apartment on one of those days, I met him, clad in a long morning wrapper, pacing back and forth a narrow passage leading to one of the windows, his hands behind him, great black rings under his eyes, his head bent forward upon his breast, — altogether such a picture of the effects of sorrow, care, and anxiety, as would have melted the hearts of the worst of his adversaries. With a sorrow almost divine, he, too, could have said of the rebellious States, 'How often would I have gathered you together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!'"

The Hon. Mr. Colfax says, "Calling upon the President one morning in the winter of 1863, I found him looking more than usually pale and careworn, and inquired the reason. He replied, that with the bad news he had received at a late hour the previous night, which had not yet been communicated to the press, he had not closed his eyes, or breakfasted; and, with an expression I shall never forget, he exclaimed, 'How willingly would I exchange places to-day with the soldier who sleeps on the ground in the Army of the Potomac!'"

Mr. Frederick Douglas, in the autumn of 1864, visited Washington; and Mr. Lincoln, wishing to converse with him upon some



points on which he desired the opinion and advice of that very remarkable man, sent his carriage, and an invitation to Mr. Douglas to "come up and take a cup of tea with him." The invitation was accepted. Probably never before was a colored man an honored guest in the White House. Mr. Douglas subsequently remarked, "Mr Lincoln is one of the few white men I ever passed an hour with, who failed to remind me in some way, before the interview terminated, that I was a negro."

The following is from a correspondent of "The New-York Independent:" "On New-Year's Day, 1865, a memorable incident occurred, of which the like was never before seen at the White House. I had noticed at sundry times, during the summer, the wild fervor and strange enthusiasm which our colored friends always manifested over the name of Abraham Lincoln. His name, with them, seems to be associated with that of his namesake, the father of the faithful. In the great crowds which gather from time to time in front of the White House in honor of the President, none shout so loudly or so wildly, and swing their hats with such utter *abandon*, while their eyes are beaming with the intensest joy, as do these simple-minded and grateful people. I have often laughed heartily at these exhibitions.

"But the scene yesterday excited far other emotions. As I entered the door of the President's House, I noticed groups of colored people gathered here and there, who seemed to be watching earnestly the inpouring throng. For nearly two hours they hung around, until the crowd of white visitors began sensibly to diminish. Then they summoned courage, and began timidly to approach the door. Some of them were richly and gayly dressed, some were in tattered garments, and others in the most fanciful and grotesque costumes. All pressed eagerly forward. When they came into the presence of the President, doubting as to their reception, the feelings of the poor creatures overcame them; and here the scene baffles my powers of description.

"For two long hours, Mr. Lincoln had been shaking the hands of the 'sovereigns,' and had become excessively weary, and his grasp languid; but his nerves rallied at the unwonted sight, and he welcomed the motley crowd with a heartiness that made them wild with exceeding joy. They laughed and wept, and wept and laughed, exclaiming through their blinding tears, 'God bless you!' 'God bless Abraham Lincoln!' 'God bress Massa Lin-

kum!’ Those who witnessed this scene will not soon forget it. For a long distance down the avenue, on my way home, I heard fast young men cursing the President for this act; but all the way the refrain rang in my ears, ‘God bless Abraham Lincoln!’”

The telegram one day announced a great battle in progress. Mr. Lincoln paced the floor, pale and haggard, unable to eat, and fearfully apprehensive of a defeat. A lady said to him, “We can at least pray.” — “Yes,” said he; and, taking his Bible, he hastened to his room. The prayer he offered was overheard; and, in the intensity of entreaty and childlike faith, it was such as seldom ascends from human lips. Ere long, a telegram announced a Union victory. He came back to the room he had left, his face beaming with joy, and said, “Good news, good news! The victory is ours, and God is good!” — “There is nothing like prayer,” the lady responded. “Yes, there is,” he replied: “praise, prayer, and praise.” It is confidently asserted, that, during the war, Mr. Lincoln found an hour every day for prayer.

There was a peculiarity in the character of this most remarkable man, a peculiarity conspicuous from the cradle to the grave, which no one yet has been successful in satisfactorily explaining. Take the following as an illustration: —

A poor old man from Tennessee went to Washington to plead for the life of his son. He had no friends. Almost by chance, and after much delay, he succeeded in working his way to the President through the crowd of senators, governors, and generals, who were impatiently waiting for an audience. Mr. Lincoln looked over his papers, and told the man that he would give him his answer the next day. The anguish-stricken father looked up with swimming eyes, and said, “To-morrow may be too late! My son is under sentence of death! The decision ought to be made now!”

“Wait a bit,” said the President, “and I will tell you a story. Col. Fisk, of Missouri, raised a regiment, and made every man agree that the colonel should do all the swearing of the regiment. One of his teamsters, John Todd, in driving a mule-team over a boggy road, completely lost his patience, and burst into a volley of oaths. The colonel called him to account. ‘John,’ said he, ‘did you not promise to let me do all the swearing of the regiment?’ — ‘Yes, I did, colonel,’ he replied: ‘but the fact was, the swearing had to be done then, or not at all; and you weren’t there to do it.’”

The President laughed at this story most heartily; and even the old man joined him in the laugh. He then, in a few words, wrote a pardon for the boy, and handed it to the father.

Perhaps the most sublime and momentous moment of his life was when he presented to his cabinet his proclamation, which was to deliver from bondage nearly four millions of human beings then living, and to rescue from that doom uncounted millions yet unborn. He had prepared it without consultation with others, and no one knew the object of the meeting. When all these grave and distinguished men, pressed in body, mind, and heart with the burden of the war, had met in the President's cabinet, Mr. Lincoln prepared himself to present the proclamation to them by taking down from the shelf "*Artemas Ward his Book*," and reading an entire chapter of his frivolous drollery, laughing in the mean time with an abandon of mirth, as if he had never cherished a serious thought.

Then, with his whole tone and manner suddenly changed, with an expression of countenance and a modulation of voice which indicated, that, in every fibre of his soul, he appreciated the grandeur of the occasion, he read that immortal document, which, as he afterwards said, was the greatest event of the nineteenth century.

In one of the darkest hours of the war, a member of his cabinet called upon him to confer respecting some weighty matters. The President commenced relating a ludicrous anecdote. "Please, Mr. President," said the secretary remonstratingly, "I did not come here this morning to hear stories. It is too serious a time." The President paused for a moment, and then said, "Sit down, sir. I respect your feelings. You cannot be more anxious than I am constantly. And I say to you now, that, if it were not for this occasional vent, I should die!"

Mr. Lincoln's literary taste was of a high order. No man more correctly appreciated poetic beauty. The most delicate shades of thought, and the purest sentiments, were those for which his mind had an intuitive affinity. His memory was stored with beautiful fragments of verse, and these were invariably of the highest literary and moral excellence.

"There are," said he on one occasion, "some quaint, queer verses, written, I think, by Oliver Wendell Holmes, entitled '*The Last Leaf*,' one of which is to me inexpressibly touching." He then repeated, —

“The mossy marbles rest  
 On the lips that he has pressed  
     In their bloom;  
 And the names he loved to hear  
 Have been carved for many a year  
     On the tomb.”

He then added, “For pure pathos, in my judgment, there is nothing finer than these six lines in the English language.” On another occasion he said, “There is a poem that has been a great favorite with me for years, to which my attention was first called, when a young man, by a friend, and which I afterwards saw, and cut from a newspaper, and carried it in my pocket, till, by frequent reading, I had it by heart.” He then repeated eleven verses of a poem of which we here give the first and last stanzas: —

“Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?  
 Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,  
 A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,  
 He passeth from life to the rest of the grave.

’Tis the wink of an eye, ’tis the draught of a breath,  
 From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,  
 From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud:  
 Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?”

Mr. Lincoln was very remarkable for his fund of anecdote. He always had his little story with which to illustrate any point; and the illustration was often found to contain resistless argument. It has been said that his stories were sometimes coarse. Upon this point, Mr. Carpenter says, after six months of the most intimate daily acquaintance, —

“Mr. Lincoln, I am convinced, has been greatly wronged in this respect. Every foul-mouthed man in the country gave currency to the slime and filth of his own imagination by attributing it to the President. It is but simple justice to his memory that I should state, that, during the entire period of my stay in Washington, after witnessing his intercourse with nearly all classes of men, embracing governors, senators, and members of Congress, officers of the army, and intimate friends, I cannot recollect to have heard him relate a circumstance to any one of them which would have been out of place uttered in a lady’s drawing-room.

“And this testimony is not unsupported by that of others, well entitled to consideration. Dr. Stone, his family physician, came



in one day to see my studies. Sitting in front of that of the President, with whom he did not sympathize politically, he remarked with much feeling, 'It is the province of a physician to probe deeply the interior lives of men ; and I affirm that Mr. Lincoln is the purest-hearted man with whom I ever came in contact.' Secretary Seward, who of the cabinet officers was probably the most intimate with the President, expressed the same sentiment in still stronger language. He once said to the Rev. Dr. Bellows, 'Mr. Lincoln is the best man I ever knew.'

The tact which the President displayed in all his responses to the various kindnesses he received excited universal admiration. On such occasions, his awkwardness seemed graceful, and his plain face beautiful. As the President entered one of the rooms of the White House on an occasion when many visitors were present, a lady stepped forward playfully with a beautiful bunch of flowers, and said, "Allow me, Mr. President, to present you with a bouquet." He took the flowers, for a moment looked admiringly on their beauty, and then, fixing his eyes upon the countenance of the lady, which was also radiant with loveliness, said, "Really, madam, if you give them to *me*, and they are *mine*, I think I cannot possibly make so good a *use* of them as to present them to *you* in return."

Upon the betrothal of the Prince of Wales to the Princess Alexandrina, Queen Victoria sent a letter to each of the European sovereigns, and also to President Lincoln, announcing the fact. Lord Lyons, the British ambassador at Washington, who was an unmarried man, sought an audience with the President, that he might communicate this important intelligence. With much formality, he presented himself at the White House, accompanied by Secretary Seward.

"May it please your Excellency," said the noble lord, "I hold in my hand an autograph-letter from my royal mistress, Queen Victoria, which I have been commanded to present to your Excellency. In it she informs your Excellency, that her son, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is about to contract a matrimonial alliance with her Royal Highness the Princess Alexandrina of Denmark."

After continuing in this style of stately address for some moments, he placed the letter in the hands of the President. Mr.

Lincoln took it, and, with a peculiar twinkle of the eye, simply responded, "Lord Lyons, go thou and do likewise."

Mr. Carpenter, in narrating this incident, adds, "It is doubtful if an English ambassador was ever addressed in this manner before; and it would be interesting to learn what success he met with in putting the reply in diplomatic language, when he reported it to her Majesty."

In conversation at the White House, a gentleman referred to a body of water in Nebraska, which was called by an Indian name signifying *weeping water*. Mr. Lincoln instantly replied, "*As laughing water*, according to Longfellow, is Minnehaha, this, evidently, should be Minneboohoo."

A gentleman who had called upon the President, in the course of conversation inquired of him how many men the rebels had in the field. Promptly and very decidedly he replied, "Twelve hundred thousand." The interrogator, in amazement, exclaimed, "Twelve hundred thousand! is it possible?" — "Yes, sir," the President replied; "twelve hundred thousand: there is no doubt of it. You see, all of our generals, when they get whipped, say the enemy outnumber them from three or five to one. I must believe them. We have four hundred thousand men in the field. Three times four make twelve. Don't you see it?"

Some gentlemen from the West called one day, with bitter complaints against the Administration. The President, as was his wont, listened to them patiently, and then replied, —

"Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it into the hands of Blondin to carry across the Niagara River on a rope, would you shake the cable, or keep shouting out to him, 'Blondin, stand up a little straighter; Blondin, stoop a little more; go a little faster; lean a little more to the north; lean a little more to the south'? No: you would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safe over. The Government are carrying an immense weight. Untold treasures are in their hands. They are doing the very best they can. Don't badger them. Keep silence, and we'll get you safe across."

"I hope," said a clergyman to him one day, "that the Lord is on our side." — "I am not at all concerned about that," was Mr. Lincoln's reply; "for I know that the Lord is *always* on the side

of the *right*. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that *I* and *this nation* should be on the Lord's side."

As the rebel confederacy was crumbling into ruins, some gentlemen asked Mr. Lincoln what he intended to do with Jeff. Davis. "There was a boy," said he, "in Springfield, who bought a coon, which, after the novelty wore off, became a great nuisance. He was one day leading him through the streets, and had his hands full to keep clear of the little vixen, who had torn his clothes half off of him. At length he sat down on the curbstone, completely fagged out. A man, passing, was stopped by the lad's disconsolate appearance, and asked the matter. 'Oh,' was the reply, 'the coon is such a trouble to me!'—'Why don't you get rid of it, then?' said the gentleman. 'Hush!' said the boy. 'Don't you see that he is gnawing his rope off? I am going to let him do it; and then I will go home, and tell the folks *that he got away from me.*'"

On the Monday before his assassination, the President, on his return from Richmond, stopped at City Point. There were very extensive hospitals there, filled with sick and wounded soldiers. Mr. Lincoln told the head surgeon that he wished to visit all the hospitals, that he might shake hands with every soldier. The surgeon endeavored to dissuade him, saying that there were between five and six thousand patients in the hospitals, and that he would find it a severe tax upon his strength to visit all the wards. But Mr. Lincoln persisted, saying, —

"I think that I am equal to the task. At any rate, I will try, and go as far as I can. I shall probably never see the boys again, and I want them to know that I appreciate what they have done for their country."

The surgeon, finding that he could not dissuade Mr. Lincoln, began his rounds, accompanying the President from bed to bed. To every man he extended his hand, and spoke a few words of sympathy. As he passed along, welcomed by all with heartfelt cordiality, he came to a ward where there was a wounded rebel. The unhappy man raised himself upon his elbow in bed as the President approached, and, with tears running down his cheeks, said, "Mr. Lincoln, I have long wanted to see you to ask your forgiveness for ever raising my hand against the old flag."

Tears filled the President's eyes. Warmly he shook the young man's hand, assuring him of his good will and heartfelt sympathy.

Several hours were occupied in the tour, when the President returned with the surgeon to his office. They had, however, but just taken their seats, when a messenger came, saying that one of the wards had been missed, and that "the boys" were very anxious to see the President. The surgeon, who was quite tired out, and who knew that Mr. Lincoln must be greatly exhausted, endeavored to dissuade him from going back; but Mr. Lincoln persisted, saying, "The boys will be so disappointed!" He therefore went with the messenger, and did not return until he had visited every bed.

Mr. Lincoln retained at the White House, to a very remarkable degree, the simple habits to which he had been accustomed in his home in Illinois. Mr. Holland relates the following characteristic anecdote:—

"He delighted to see his familiar Western friends, and gave them always a cordial welcome. He met them on the old footing, and fell at once into the accustomed habits of talk and story-telling. An old acquaintance, with his wife, visited Washington. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln proposed to these friends to ride in the presidential carriage. It should be stated in advance, that the two men had probably never seen each other with gloves on in their lives, unless when they were used as protection from the cold. The question of each — Mr. Lincoln at the White House, and his friend at the hotel — was, whether he should wear gloves. Of course, the ladies urged gloves; but Mr. Lincoln only put his in his pocket, to be used or not according to circumstances. When the presidential party arrived at the hotel to take in their friends, they found the gentleman, overcome by his wife's persuasions, very handsomely gloved. The moment he took his seat, he began to draw off the clinging kids, while Mr. Lincoln began to draw his on. 'No, no, no!' protested his friend, tugging at his gloves, 'it is none of my doings. Put up your gloves, Mr. Lincoln.' So the two old friends were on even and easy terms, and had their ride after their old fashion."

The Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, on one occasion, called at the White House with an elderly lady who was in great trouble. Her son had been in the army, but for some offence had been court-martialled, and sentenced either to death, or imprisonment for a long term at hard labor. There were some extenuating circumstances. The President gave the woman a long and attentive



hearing, and then, turning to the representative, said, "Do you think," Mr. Stevens, "that this is a case which will warrant my interference?" — "With my knowledge of the facts and parties," was the reply, "I should have no hesitation in granting a pardon." — "Then," replied Mr. Lincoln, "I will pardon him." Turning to the table, he wrote the pardon, and handed it to the mother. Her gratitude so overcame her, that for a moment she was speechless, taking the paper in silence; but, as she was descending the stairs with Mr. Stevens, she turned to him, and said very earnestly, "I knew it was all a copperhead lie." — "To what do you refer, madam?" Mr. Stevens inquired. "Why, they told me," she replied, "that he was an ugly-looking man; but he is the handsomest man I ever saw in my life."

And surely there was beauty in that furrowed, care-worn, gentle face. A lady connected with the Christian Commission had several interviews with him, consulting him in reference to her humane duties. At the close of one of these interviews, Mr. Lincoln said to her, with that child-like frankness and simplicity so characteristic of him, —

"Madam, I have formed a high opinion of your Christian character; and now, as we are alone, I have a mind to ask you to give me, in brief, your idea of what constitutes a true Christian."

She replied at some length, stating in substance, that, in her judgment, "it consisted of a conviction of one's own sinfulness and weakness, and personal need of a Saviour for strength and support; that views of mere doctrine might and would differ; but when one was really brought to feel his need of divine help, and to seek the aid of the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance, it was satisfactory evidence of his having been born again."

With deep emotion, he replied, "If what you have told me is really a correct view of this great subject, I think that I can say with sincerity, that I hope that I am a Christian. I had lived, until my boy Willie died, without realizing fully these things. That blow overwhelmed me. It showed me my weakness as I had never felt it before; and, if I can take what you have stated as a *test*, I think that I can safely say that I know something of that change of which you speak: and I will further add, that it has been my intention for some time, at a suitable opportunity, to make a public religious profession."

"Oh, how hard it is," said he one day, "to die, and not leave the world any better for one's little life in it!"

Four years of civil war passed slowly and sadly away. There was another presidential election. Those who were opposed to Mr. Lincoln and the war rallied in great strength; but Mr. Lincoln was triumphantly re-elected, receiving two hundred and twelve out of two hundred and thirty-three electoral votes. The evening of his election, he said, in reference to this emphatic approval of his administration by the people, —

"I am thankful to God for this approval of the people; but while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. I do not impugn the motives of any one opposed to me. It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one; but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by a free government and the rights of humanity."

The last hope of the rebels was now gone. It was manifest beyond all controversy that the American people would not submit to have their government broken up by traitors. Again he said, in response to a delegation which waited upon him with congratulations, speaking of the election, —

"It has demonstrated that a people's government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. — Until now, it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows also how strong and sound we still are. It shows also that we have more men now than when the war began. Gold is good in its place; but living, brave, and patriotic men are better than gold."

Every month now indicated that the Rebellion was drawing near to its close. The triumphs of Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, were striking the hearts of the rebels with dismay, and inspiring all loyal hearts with hope. The National Government had, in the field, armies amounting to over seven hundred thousand men; and six hundred and seventy vessels of war were afloat, carrying four thousand six hundred and ten guns. At President Lincoln's suggestion, Congress passed an act recommending to the States an *amendment to the Constitution*, prohibiting slavery. This event was generally hailed by the country with great satisfaction. This settled forever the efficacy of his proclamation of emancipation. Friends and foes now alike admitted the great ability of Abraham Lincoln.

An immense and enthusiastic crowd attended his second inauguration. His address on the occasion, characteristic of the man, was one of the noblest utterances which ever fell from the lips of a ruler when entering upon office. In allusion to the parties arrayed against each other in the war, he said, —

“Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. ‘Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!’

“If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences, which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may soon pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondmen’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword, — as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, ‘The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’

“With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

On the morning of the 3d of April, 1865, it was announced by telegraph that the Union army had entered Richmond; that Lee was in full retreat, pursued by Grant; and that President Lincoln had gone to the front. No pen can describe the joy with which these tidings were received. The war was over; slavery was

dead; and the Union, cemented in freedom, was stronger than ever before. Contrary to his own estimate of himself, Mr. Lincoln was one of the most courageous of men. He went directly into the rebel capital, which was then swarming with rebels. Without any guard but the sailors who had rowed him a mile up the river in a boat from the man-of-war in which he ascended the stream, he entered the thronged and tumultuous city, which was then enveloped in flames, the torch having been applied by the retreating foe. He was on foot, leading his little boy "Tad" by the hand.

The rumor of his presence soon spread through the city. The blacks crowded around him, shouting, singing, laughing, praying, and with all other demonstrations of the wildest joy. A poor woman stood in the door-way of her hut, quivering with emotion, exclaiming, as a flood of tears ran down her cheeks, "I thank you, dear Jesus, that I behold President Linkum." Others seemed convulsed with joy as they cried out, "Bless de Lord! bless de Lord!" At last the road became so choked with the multitude, that it was necessary to send soldiers to clear the way.

After visiting the headquarters of Gen. Weitzel, and taking a drive round the city, the President returned to City Point, and again soon after revisited Richmond with Mrs. Lincoln and Vice-President Johnson. On this occasion, he had an interview with some of the prominent citizens, by whom he afterwards felt that he had been deceived, and his confidence betrayed. From this trip he returned to Washington, to consecrate his energies to the reconstruction of the nation after these fearful shocks of war.

Mr. Lincoln was a very frank man. He did nothing by guile. No one was left in doubt in respect to his views. The great question of reconstruction now engrossed every thinking mind. In a letter to Gen. Wadsworth, he had written, —

"You desire to know, in the event of our complete success in the field, the same being followed by loyal and cheerful submission on the part of the South, if universal amnesty should not be accompanied with universal suffrage. Since you know my private inclination as to what terms should be granted to the South in the contingency mentioned, I will here add, that should our success thus be realized, followed by such desired results, I cannot see, if universal amnesty is granted, how, under the circumstances, I



can avoid exacting, in return, universal suffrage, or at least suffrage on the basis of intelligence and military service."

We have spoken of the attempts which were made to assassinate President Lincoln before his inauguration. His life was constantly threatened. His friends urged him to practise caution; but this was so contrary to his nature, that he could not be persuaded to do so. He walked the streets of Washington unattended, and as freely as any other citizen.

On the 14th of April, Gen. Grant was in the city; and the manager of Ford's Theatre invited the President and the General to witness on his boards the representation, that evening, of "Our American Cousin." To assist in drawing a crowd, it was announced in the play-bills that they would both be present. Gen. Grant left the city. President Lincoln, feeling, with his characteristic kindness of heart, that it would be a disappointment if he should fail them, very reluctantly consented to go. With his wife and two friends, he reached the theatre a little before nine o'clock; and they took their seats in a private box reserved for them. The house was full in every part; and the whole audience rose as the President entered, and he was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm.

As the President, having taken his seat, was apparently listening with great interest to the play, a play-actor by the name of John Wilkes Booth worked his way through the crowd, in the rear of the dress-circle, and, reaching the door of the box where the President was seated, presented a pistol within a few inches of his head, and fired a bullet into his brain. Mr. Lincoln, reclining in his chair, instantly lost all consciousness, and did not move. The assassin, brandishing a dagger, leaped upon the stage, and shouting theatrically, "*Sic semper tyrannis!*" rushed across it in the terrible confusion which ensued, mounted a fleet horse at the door, and escaped.

The helpless form of the President, bleeding and unconscious, was borne across the street to a private house. A surgical examination showed that the wound was mortal. It was a sad scene. Upon pillows drenched with blood lay the President, senseless and dying, his brains oozing from his wound. The leading men of the Government had speedily gathered, overwhelmed with grief. Staunton and Welles and Sumner and M'Culloch were there; and tears flooded the eyes of these strong men, while audible sobs burst

from their lips. Senator Sumner tenderly held the hand of the sufferer, and wept with uncontrollable emotion. At twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock in the morning, President Lincoln, without recovering consciousness, breathed his last.



ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

It was a widespread conspiracy for the death of the leading officers of the Government and of the army. The President, Vice-President Johnson, Secretary Seward, Gen. Grant, and others, were marked for destruction. When Booth was creeping around the dress-circle of the theatre with his pistol, another of the assassins, by the name of Powell, entered the sick-chamber of Secretary Seward, where the illustrious minister was helpless on a bed of suffering, his jaw being broken, and he being otherwise severely injured, by the accidental overturn of his carriage. The murderer, a man of herculean frame and strength, reached the chamber-door of his victim by asserting that he came with medicine from the physician. With the butt of his pistol he knocked down and stunned Mr. Frederic Seward, the son of the Secretary, who endeavored to arrest his entrance. Then leaping upon the bed,

with sinewy arm, three times he plunged his dagger into the throat and neck of Mr. Seward. The wounded man, in the struggle, rolled from his bed upon the floor. An attendant sprang upon the assassin; but the wretch with his dagger cut himself loose, and escaped into the street, after stabbing five persons who attempted to arrest him in his escape. A kind Providence, in various ways, sheltered the others who were marked for destruction.

It was not deemed safe to inform Mr. Seward, in his perilous condition, of the assassination of the President, as it was feared that the shock would be greater than he could bear. Sunday morning, however, he had his bed wheeled round, so that he could see the tops of the trees in the park opposite his chamber. His eye caught sight of the stars and stripes at half-mast over the building of the War Department. For a moment he gazed upon the flag in silence, and then, turning to his attendant, said, "The President is dead!" The attendant, much embarrassed, stammered a reply. "If he had been alive," continued the Secretary, "he would have been the first to call upon me. But he has not been here, nor has he sent to know how I am; and there is the flag at half-mast!" As he said this, tears rolled down his cheeks.

Never before, in the history of the world, was a nation plunged into such deep grief by the death of its ruler. Abraham Lincoln had won the affections of all patriot hearts. Strong men met in the streets, and wept in speechless anguish. It is not too much to say that a nation was in tears. As the awful tidings flew along the wires, funeral-bells were tolled in city and in country, flags everywhere were at half-mast, and groups gathered in silent consternation. It was Saturday morning when the murder was announced. On Sunday, all the churches were draped in mourning. The atrocious act was the legitimate result of the vile Rebellion, and was in character with its developed ferocity from the beginning to the end.

The grief of the colored people was sublime in its universality and its intensity. A Northern gentleman, who was in Charleston, S. C., when the tidings of the assassination reached there, writes, —

"I never saw such sad faces or heard such heavy heart-beatings as here in Charleston the day the dreadful news came. The colored people, the native loyalists, were like children bereaved



of an only and a loved parent. I saw one old woman going up the street wringing her hands, and saying aloud as she walked, looking straight before her, so absorbed in her grief that she noticed no one, —

“‘O Lord, O Lord, O Lord! Massa Sam’s dead! Massa Sam’s dead! O Lord! Massa Sam’s dead!’

“‘Who’s dead, aunty?’ I asked her.

“‘Massa Sam!’ she said, not looking at me. ‘O Lord, O Lord! Massa Sam’s dead!’

“‘Who’s Massa Sam?’ I asked.

“‘Uncle Sam!’ she said. ‘O Lord, O Lord!’

“I was not quite sure that she meant the President, and I spoke again. ‘Who’s Massa Sam, aunty?’

“‘Mr. Linkum,’ she said, and resumed wringing her hands, and moaning in utter hopelessness of sorrow. The poor creature was too ignorant to comprehend any difference between the very unreal Uncle Sam and the actual President; but her heart told her that he whom Heaven had sent in answer to her prayers was lying in a bloody grave, and that she and her race were left *fatherless*.”

The body of the President was removed to the White House, and placed in a coffin almost buried in flowers, which the affection of a bereaved people supplied. It is estimated that fifty thousand persons went to the White House to take a last look of his loved face. The funeral solemnities were conducted by clergymen of the Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, and Baptist churches. Dr. Gurley, in his noble tribute to the deceased, said, —

“Probably no man, since the days of Washington, was ever so deeply and firmly embedded and enshrined in the hearts of the people as Abraham Lincoln. Nor was it a mistaken confidence and love. He deserved it, deserved it well, deserved it all. He merited it by his character, by his acts, and by the tenor and tone and spirit of his life.”

It may be truly said that the funeral-train extended fifteen hundred miles, — from Washington to Springfield, Ill. Groups gathered as mourners at every station, bells were tolled, and bands of music breathed forth their plaintive requiems. In some places, the railway, for miles, was lined with a continuous group of men, women, and children, standing in silence, with uncovered heads and swimming eyes, as the solemn pageant swept by. It



would require a volume to describe the scenes which were witnessed in the various cities and villages through which the funeral procession passed.

The train reached Springfield, Ill., on the morning of the 3d of May. Bishop Simpson of the Methodist Church, a personal friend of the President, in his funeral address quoted the following words from one of the speeches of Mr. Lincoln in 1859. Speaking of the slave-power, Mr. Lincoln said,—

“Broken by it I, too, may be; bow to it I never will. The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause which I deem to be just; and it shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of the almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world besides, and I standing up boldly and alone, and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before high Heaven, and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love.”

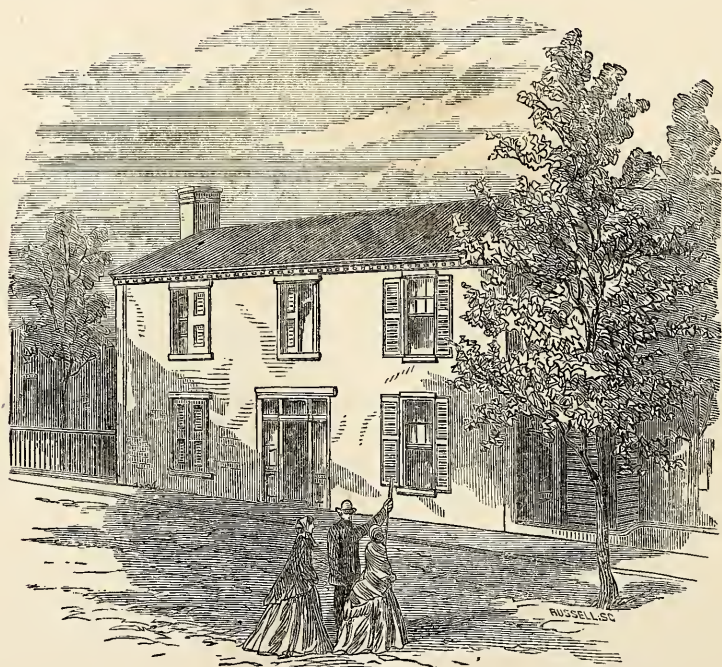
England vied with America in expressions of respect and affection for our martyred President. The statement contained in “The London Spectator” will surely be the verdict of posterity, that Abraham Lincoln was “the best if not the ablest man then ruling over any country in the civilized world.” The Queen of England, with her own hand, wrote a letter of condolence to Mrs. Lincoln. The sympathy which was manifested for us by the English, in this our great grief, so touched all loyal hearts, that Americans began to think that it was possible that England and America might yet again be united in the bonds of brotherly love, burying all past grievances in oblivion.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ANDREW JOHNSON.

His Lowly Origin. — Struggles for Education. — Early Distinction. — Alderman, Mayor, State Representative, State Senator. — Speeches. — Member of Congress. — Governor. — Anecdote. — United-States Senator. — Opposition to Secession. — Speeches. — Gradual Change of Views. — Military Governor of Tennessee. — Address to the Colored People. — Vigorous Administration. — Vice-President. — Speeches. — President. — Political Views. — Agreement with the Republican Party. — Conflict with Congress. — His Policy. — Articles of Amendment. — Peter Cooper. — Future Prospects.

THE early life of Andrew Johnson contains but the record of poverty, destitution, and friendlessness. He was born the 29th of



RESIDENCE OF ANDREW JOHNSON.

December, 1808, in Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina. His parents, belonging to the class of the "poor whites" of the South, were in such circumstances, that they could not confer even the

slightest advantages of education upon their child. When Andrew was five years of age, his father accidentally lost his life while heroically endeavoring to save a friend from drowning. Until ten years of age, Andrew was a ragged boy about the streets, supported by the labor of his mother, who obtained her living with her own hands.

He then, having never attended a school one day, and being unable either to read or write, was apprenticed to a tailor in his native town. A benevolent gentleman of Raleigh was in the habit of going to the tailor's shop occasionally, and reading to the boys at work there. He often read from the speeches of distinguished British statesmen. Andrew, who was endowed with a mind of more than ordinary native ability, became much interested in these speeches: his ambition was roused, and he was inspired with a strong desire to learn to read.

He accordingly applied himself to the alphabet, and, with the assistance of some of his fellow-workmen, learned his letters. He then called upon the gentleman to borrow the book of speeches. The owner, pleased with his zeal, not only gave him the book, but assisted him in learning to combine the letters into words. Under such difficulties he pressed onward laboriously, spending usually ten or twelve hours at work in the shop, and then robbing himself of rest and recreation to devote such time as he could to reading.

In 1824, when sixteen years of age, having finished his apprenticeship, he went to Laurens Court House, in South Carolina, and worked as a journeyman tailor for two years. It does not appear, that, during this time, he made much progress in his attempts to learn to read with correctness and fluency. It is said that he became quite interested in a girl of the village, and would have married her but for the objections which her parents made in consequence of his extreme youth.

In 1826, he returned to Raleigh, and, taking his mother with him, removed to Greenville, a small town in East Tennessee, where he resumed his work as a journeyman tailor, and married a young woman of very estimable character, and who was so decidedly in advance of him in point of education, that she became his teacher in reading, writing, and arithmetic. She read to him as he plied the needle on the bench, and in the evenings instructed him in other branches. Rapidly the young mechanic advanced in intelligence. His mental energy gave him influence among the

workmen. Words came easily at his bidding, and he knew well how to use all the information he gained. His popularity with the working-classes was such, that, in 1828, he was chosen one of the aldermen in the little town in which he dwelt; which position he held for two years, when, at the age of twenty-two, he was elected mayor. The position which he then occupied in public esteem may be inferred from the fact, that he was also appointed, by the county court, one of the trustees of Rhea Academy.

He now began to take a lively interest in political affairs; identifying himself with the working-classes, to which he belonged. His zeal in their behalf, and the ever-increasing ability with which he espoused their cause, won their esteem, and secured for him, with great unanimity, their votes. In 1835, he was elected a member of the House of Representatives in Tennessee. He was then just twenty-seven years of age. He became a very active member of the legislature, gave his adhesion to the Democratic party, and in 1840 "stumped the State," advocating Martin Van Buren's claims to the presidency, in opposition to those of Gen. Harrison. In this campaign he acquired much readiness as a speaker, and extended and increased his reputation.

In 1841, he was elected State senator from Hawkins and Greene Counties. The duties which devolved upon him he discharged with ability, and was universally esteemed as an earnest, honest man, heartily advocating whatever he thought to be right, and denouncing what he thought to be wrong. In 1843, he was elected a member of Congress, and, by successive elections, held that important post for ten years. In 1853, he was elected Governor of Tennessee, and was re-elected in 1855. In all these responsible positions, he discharged his duties with distinguished ability, and proved himself the warm friend of the working-classes.

The following characteristic anecdote is related of him when Governor of Tennessee. With his own hands he cut and made a very handsome suit of clothes, and sent them as a present to Gov. M'Goffin of Kentucky, who had been his friend and companion in earlier days. The Kentucky governor had been a blacksmith by trade. He returned the compliment by forging upon the anvil, with his own hands, a very neat pair of shovel and tongs, which he sent to Gov. Johnson, with the wish that they would help to keep alive the flame of their old friendship.

In 1857, Mr. Johnson was elected, by the Legislature of Ten-



nessee, United-States senator for the term of six years. In Congress, both in the Senate and in the House, he adopted, in general, the Democratic policy. He opposed a protective tariff, and advocated the Homestead Bill. He belonged to the strict constructionist class of politicians, fearing lest the National Government should have too much power; and he opposed any United-States bank, and all schemes of internal improvement by the National Government. He also went strongly with the South in its views of the incompetency of Congress to prevent the extension of slavery into the Territories.

Years before, in 1845, he had warmly advocated the annexation of Texas; stating however, as a reason, that he thought this annexation would probably prove "to be the gateway out of which the sable sons of Africa are to pass from bondage to freedom, and become merged in a population congenial to themselves." In 1850, he also earnestly supported the compromise measures, the two essential features of which were, that the white people of the Territories should be permitted to decide for themselves whether they would enslave the colored population or not, and that the free States of the North should return to the South any persons who should attempt to escape from slavery.

Mr. Johnson was never ashamed of his lowly origin: on the contrary, he often took pride in avowing that he owed his distinction to his own exertions. "Sir," said he on the floor of the Senate, "I do not forget that I am a mechanic. Neither do I forget that Adam was a tailor and sewed fig-leaves, and that our Saviour was the son of a carpenter."

In the spring of 1858, Senator Hammond, of South Carolina made a speech in Congress, containing the following sentences:—

"In all social systems, there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. Such a class you must have. It constitutes the very mudsill of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air as to build either the one or the other, except on this mudsill. The man who lives by daily labor, and who has to put out his labor in the market, and take the best he can get for it; in short, your whole class of manual laborers and operatives, as you call them, —are essentially slaves. The difference is, that our slaves are hired for life: yours are hired by the day. Our slaves are black; yours are white: our slaves do not vote; yours vote."

Senator Johnson, in his characteristic reply, said, "Will it do to assume that the man who labors with his hands is a slave? No, sir. I am a laborer with my hands, and I never considered myself a slave."

Mr. Hammond, interrupting him, inquired, "Will the senator define a slave?"

Mr. Johnson replied, "What we understand to be a slave in the South is a person who is held to service during his or her natural life, subject to and under the control of a master, who has the right to appropriate the products of his or her labor to his own use. If we were to follow out the idea that every operative and laborer is a slave, we should find a great many distinguished slaves since the world began. Socrates, who first conceived the idea of the immortality of the soul, pagan as he was, labored with his own hands; yes, wielded the chisel and the mallet, giving polish and finish to the stone. He afterwards turned to be a fashioner and constructor of the mind.

"Paul, the great expounder, himself was a tent-maker, and worked with his own hands. Was he a slave? Archimedes, who declared, that, if he had a place on which to rest the fulcrum, with the power of his lever he could move the world,—was he a slave? Adam, our great father and head, the lord of the world, was a tailor by trade. I wonder if he were a slave."

Mr. Johnson was strongly opposed to secession, not however, at first, upon the ground that the slaveholders were not right in their claim that slavery should be nationalized: but, foreseeing the folly of an appeal to arms, he urged them to remain, and struggle for the attainment of their ends on the floor of Congress; or, as he expressed it, to "fight for their constitutional rights on the battlements of the Constitution." He said, "We can more successfully resist Black Republicanism by remaining within the Union than by going out of it. As to Mr. Lincoln, he said on the 19th of December, 1861, "I voted against him; I spoke against him; I spent my money to defeat him."

There was, perhaps, no one in Congress who exposed the absurdity of the doctrine of secession in strains more eloquent and convincing to the popular mind.

"Now let me ask," said he, "can any one believe, that, in the creation of this Government, its founders intended that it should have the power to acquire territory and form it into States, and

then permit them to go out of the Union? Let us take a case. How long has it been since your armies were in Mexico, your brave men exposed to the diseases, the sufferings, incident to a campaign of that kind; many of them falling at the point of the bayonet, consigned to their long, narrow home, with no winding-sheet but their blankets saturated with their blood? What did Mexico cost you? One hundred and twenty million dollars. What did you pay for the country you acquired, besides? Fifteen million dollars.

"Peace was made; territory was acquired; and, in a few years, California, from that territory, erected herself into a free and independent State. Under the provisions of the Constitution, we admitted her as a member of this confederacy. And now, after having expended one hundred and twenty million dollars in the war; after having lost many of our bravest and most gallant men; after having paid fifteen million dollars to Mexico for the territory, and admitted it into the Union as a State, according to this modern doctrine, the National Government was just made to let them step in, and then to let them step out! Is it not absurd to say that California, on her own volition, without regard to the consideration paid for her, without regard to the policy which dictated her acquisition by the United States, can walk out, and bid you defiance?

"But we need not stop here. Let us go to Texas. Texas was engaged in a revolution with Mexico. She succeeded in the assertion and establishment of her independence. She applied for admission into this family of States. After she was in, she was oppressed by the debts of the war which had resulted in her separation from Mexico. She was harassed by Indians on her border. There was an extent of territory that lies north, if my memory serves me right, embracing what is now called the Territory of New Mexico. Texas had it not in her power to protect the citizens that were there. It was a dead limb, paralyzed, lifeless.

"The Federal Government came along as a kind physician, saying, 'We will take this limb, vitalize it by giving protection to the people, and incorporating it into a territorial government; and, in addition to that, we will give you ten million dollars, and you may retain your own public lands.' And the other States were taxed in common to pay this ten million dollars. Now, after

all this is done, is Texas to say, 'I will walk out of this Union'? Were there no other parties to this compact? Did we take in California, did we take in Texas, just to benefit themselves?

"Again: take the case of Louisiana. What did we pay for her in 1803? and for what was she wanted? Was it just to let Louisiana into the Union? Was it just for the benefit of that particular locality? Was not the mighty West looked to? Was it not to secure the free navigation of the Mississippi River, the mouth of which was then in the possession of France? Yes: the navigation of that river was wanted. Simply for Louisiana? No, but for all the States. The United States paid fifteen million dollars, and France ceded the country to the United States. It remained in a territorial condition for a while, sustained and protected by the strong arm of the Federal Government. We acquired the territory and the navigation of the river; and the money was paid for the benefit of all the States, and not of Louisiana exclusively.

"And now that this great valley is filled up; now that the navigation of the Mississippi is one hundred times more important than it was then; now, after the United States have paid the money, have acquired the title to Louisiana, and have incorporated her into the confederacy,—it is proposed that she should go out of the Union!

"In 1815, when her shores were invaded; when her city was about to be sacked; when her booty and her beauty were about to fall a prey to British aggression,—the brave men of Tennessee and of Kentucky and of the surrounding States rushed into her borders and upon her shores, and, under the lead of her own gallant Jackson, drove the invading forces away. And now, after all this, after the money has been paid, after the free navigation of the river has been obtained,—not for the benefit of Louisiana alone, but for her in common with all the States,—Louisiana says to the other States,—

"'We will go out of this confederacy. We do not care if you did fight our battles; we do not care if you did acquire the free navigation of this river from France: we will go out, and constitute ourselves an independent power, and bid defiance to the other States.'

"It may be, that, at this moment, there is not a citizen in the State of Louisiana who would think of obstructing the free navi-



gation of the river. But are not nations controlled by their interests in varying circumstances? And hereafter, when a conflict of interest arises, Louisiana might feel disposed to tax our citizens going down there. It is a power that I am not willing to concede to be exercised at the discretion of any authority outside of this Government. So sensitive have been the people of my State upon the free navigation of that river, that as far back as 1796, — now sixty-four years ago, — in their Bill of Rights, before they passed under the jurisdiction of the United States, they declared —

“That an equal participation of the free navigation of the Mississippi is one of the inherent rights of the citizens of this State. It cannot, therefore, be conceded to any prince, potentate, power, person or persons, whatever.’

“This shows the estimate that people fixed on this stream sixty-four years ago; and now we are told, that, if Louisiana does go out, it is not her intention to tax the people above. Who can tell what may be the intention of Louisiana hereafter? Are we willing to place the rights, the travel, and the commerce of our citizens at the discretion of any power outside of this Government? I will not.

“How long is it since Florida lay on our coasts an annoyance to us? And now she has got feverish about being an independent and separate government, while she has not as many qualified voters as there are in one Congressional district of any other State. What condition did Florida occupy in 1811? She was in possession of Spain. What did the United States think about having adjacent territory outside of their jurisdiction? Spain was inimical to the United States; and, in view of the great principles of self-preservation, the Congress of the United States passed a resolution, declaring that, if Spain attempted to transfer Florida into the hands of any other power, the United States would take possession of it. There was the Territory lying upon our border, outside of the jurisdiction of the United States; and we declared, by an act of Congress, that no foreign power should possess it.

“We went still farther, and appropriated one hundred thousand dollars, and authorized the President to enter, and take possession of it with the means placed in his hands. Afterwards we negotiated with Spain, and gave six million dollars for the Territory; and we established a territorial government for it. What next?

We undertook to drive out the Seminole Indians; and we had a war, in which this Government lost more than in all the other wars it was engaged in; and we paid the sum of twenty-five million dollars to get the Seminoles out of the swamps, so that the Territory could be inhabited by white men.

“But now that the Territory is paid for, the Indians are driven out, and twenty-five million dollars have been expended, they want no longer the protection of this Government, but will go out without consulting the other States; without reference to the remaining parties to the compact. Where will she go? Will she attach herself to Spain again? Will she pass back under the jurisdiction of the Seminoles? After having been nurtured and protected and fostered by all these States, now, without regard to them, is she to be allowed, at her own volition, to withdraw from the Union? I say that she has no constitutional right to do it. When she does it, it is an act of aggression. If she succeeds, it will only be a successful revolution; if she does not succeed, she must take the penalties and terrors of the law.

“I have referred to the acts of Congress for acquiring Florida as setting forth a principle. What is that principle? It is, that, from the geographical relations of this Territory to the United States, we authorized the President to expend a hundred thousand dollars to get a foothold there, and especially to take possession of it if it were likely to pass to any foreign power.”

In such strains of eloquence and moral demonstration, Senator Johnson exposed the absurdity of the doctrine of secession.

As the secessionists grew more determined in their measures, Mr. Johnson grew more bold in his opposition. The slaveholders became exceedingly exasperated. He was denounced as a traitor to the South, and was threatened with assassination. But he was the last man to be intimidated by menaces. The North looked with admiration upon the moral courage he displayed, in thus contending, as it were single-handed, against almost every senator and representative of the South. In this admiration, they forgot that Mr. Johnson was, and ever had been, with the South in their claims.

“I am opposed,” he said, “to secession. I believe it no remedy for the evils complained of. Instead of acting with that division of my Southern friends who take ground for secession, I shall take other grounds, *while I try to accomplish the same end*. I think that

this battle ought to be fought, not outside, but inside, of the Union."

In consequence of this course, the wrath of the secessionists fell bitterly upon him. He was burned in effigy at Memphis; and on his return to Tennessee in April, 1861, he was insulted repeatedly by mobs, and threatened with lynching. A price even was set upon his head. This did but inspire his zeal, and enable him with more eloquence to plead the Union cause.

Kentucky was now invaded, and the rebels in large armies were ravaging Tennessee, plundering, burning, murdering. Every man who would not espouse their cause was in danger of being hung on the limb of the next tree. Never before was there more ferocity exhibited in a civilized land. A rebel band sacked his home, drove his sick wife and child into the streets, confiscated his slaves (for, with increasing wealth, he had become a slave-owner), and turned his house into a hospital and barracks for the soldiers.

The heroism with which Mr. Johnson opposed the secessionists received a new impulse from these outrages; and the Union party at the North began to regard him as, in all points, in sympathy with them. Indeed, as he witnessed the violence of the proslavery-men, and saw clearly that the institution of slavery was at the foundation of all their treason, his speeches indicated a continually increasing sympathy with the views of the great Republican party which had elected Abraham Lincoln. He had already said, —

"We may as well talk of things as they are; for, if any thing can be *treason*, is not levying war upon the Government treason? Is not the attempt to take the property of the Government, and to expel the soldiers therefrom, *treason*? Is not attempting to resist the collection of the revenue, attempting to exclude the mails, and driving the Federal courts from her borders, *treason*? What is it? It is *treason*, and nothing but *treason*."

This speech, to which reason could make no reply, was met with hisses, reproaches, threats, and a shower of abuse. Growing still bolder, he exclaimed, —

"Does it need any search to find those who are levying war, and giving aid and comfort to enemies against the United States? And this is treason. Treason ought to be punished, North and South; and, if there are traitors, they should be entitled to traitors' reward."

Again he said, speaking of the rebels, "Were I the President

of the United States, I would do as Thomas Jefferson did in 1806 with Aaron Burr. I would have them arrested and tried for treason; and, if convicted, by the Eternal God they should suffer the penalty of the law at the hands of the executioner! Sir, treason must be punished. Its enormity, and the extent and depth of the offence, must be made known."

This was said in the Senate Chamber on the 2d of March, 1861. A few weeks after this, on the 19th of June, in a speech at Cincinnati, he said, speaking in the same impassioned strain, "I repeat, this odious doctrine of secession should be crushed out, destroyed, and totally annihilated. No government can stand, no religious or moral or social organization can stand, where this doctrine is tolerated. It is disintegration, universal dissolution. Therefore I repeat, that this odious and abominable doctrine (you must pardon me for using a strong expression, I do not say it in a profane sense),—but this doctrine I conceive to be hell-born and hell-bound, and one which will carry every thing in its train, unless it is arrested, and crushed out from our midst."

Mr. Johnson was a Democrat of the Jacksonian school. Though he had strongly leaned to the doctrine of State sovereignty, and a strict construction of the Constitution, the assumptions of the secessionists were crowding him over into the ranks of those who would increase rather than diminish the power of the Central Government. Thus upon this point he had abandoned the old Jeffersonian party, and allied himself with the Federalists.

In February, 1862, by the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, the main body of the rebel army was driven out of Western and Middle Tennessee. President Lincoln, with the approval of the Senate, appointed Andrew Johnson Military Governor of the State. The appointment was received with enthusiasm by nearly all the loyal men in the Union. On the 12th of March, he reached Nashville, and commenced his administration with energy, which cheered the hearts of the long-suffering Unionists.

The Mayor of Nashville and the City Council refused to take the oath of allegiance. He sent them to the penitentiary, and appointed others in their place. The editor of "The Nashville Banner," for uttering treasonable sentiments, was imprisoned, and his paper suppressed. All over the State, guerilla secessionists were maltreating the Unionists, plundering their homes, and driving their wives and children into the streets, as they had done with



Mr. Johnson's family. The difficulty was met in the following proclamation: —

"I, Andrew Johnson, do hereby proclaim, that, in every instance in which a Union man is arrested and maltreated by marauding bands, five or more rebels, from the most prominent in the immediate neighborhood, shall be arrested, imprisoned, and otherwise dealt with as the nature of the case may require; and further, in all cases where the property of citizens, loyal to the Government of the United States, is taken or destroyed, full and ample remuneration shall be made to them out of the property of such rebels in the vicinity as have sympathized with, and given aid, comfort, information, or encouragement to, the parties committing such depredations."

This order was issued on the 9th of May. Early in June, another order appeared, declaring that all persons guilty of uttering disloyal sentiments, who should refuse to take the oath of allegiance and give bonds in a thousand dollars for their future good behavior, should be sent South, and treated as spies, that is, hung, if again found within the Federal lines. Six clergymen boldly preached treason from their pulpits. As they persisted, after due warning, five were sent to prison, and the sixth paroled in consequence of sickness.

The rebel armies again entered the State. Nashville became isolated, and was in a state of siege. There were many families in Nashville who were starving, their husbands and fathers having joined the rebels. Gov. Johnson assessed a tax upon the wealthy rebels in the vicinity for their support. Timid ones began to talk of the necessity of surrender. "I am no military man," he said; "but any one who talks of surrendering, I will shoot."

There was in the Union army in Tennessee a Methodist clergyman, Col. Moody, who, in consequence of his patriotic zeal and chivalric bravery, accompanied at the same time with active piety in preaching and in prayer, had acquired the *sobriquet* of the "Fighting Parson." Col. Moody chanced to be in Washington, and related to President Lincoln the following anecdote respecting Andrew Johnson. Gen. Buell, whose reputation as a determined patriot did not stand very high, being then in command of the Union forces in Tennessee, had evacuated his position in the southern portion of that State, and had fallen back upon Nashville,

followed by a rebel army. He then proposed abandoning the city. As we have mentioned, Gov. Johnson would not listen to this: on the contrary, he declared his determination to defend the city to the last extremity, and then to commit it to the flames, rather than surrender it to the rebels.

He was so dissatisfied with Gen. Buell's course, that he wrote a letter to President Lincoln, urging his removal. Gen. Thomas was in cordial sympathy with Gov. Johnson, and was placed in command of troops in the city. Soon, however, he took a more important command; and Gen. Negley took charge of the defence. The rebels made several attacks upon the outworks, but were gallantly repulsed. The city was now in a state of siege, provisions were very scarce, and the troops were on half-rations.

Under these circumstances, Col. Moody had a chance interview with Gov. Johnson in Nashville. The governor was in his office, in a state of great excitement, walking the floor, in conversation with two gentlemen. The gentlemen withdrew as the colonel entered, leaving him alone with the governor. After a moment's pause, the governor came up to him, evidently greatly agitated, and said,—

"Moody, we are sold out. Buell is a traitor. He is going to evacuate the city; and, in forty-eight hours, we shall be in the hands of the rebels."

He then commenced rapidly pacing the floor again, wringing his hands, and chafing like a caged tiger, utterly unmindful of his friend's entreaties that he would become calm. Suddenly he stopped, and, turning to the colonel, said, "Moody, can you pray?"

"That is my business, sir," the colonel replied, "as a minister of the gospel."

"Well, Moody," said Gov. Johnson, "I wish you would pray;" and, as the colonel kneeled, the governor impetuously threw himself upon his knees by his side. A Western Methodist clergyman does not pray in low tones of voice, or with languid utterance. As with increasing fervor the colonel pleaded with God to interpose in their great peril, and save them, the governor threw one of his arms around his neck, and responded heartily, and with the deepest emotion. Closing the prayer with an emphatic "Amen" from each, they arose.

Gov. Johnson drew a long breath, seemed somewhat quieted, and said, "Moody, I feel better. Will you stand by me?"

"Certainly I will," was the reply. The governor paced the floor for a moment silently, and then said, "Well, Moody, I can depend on you. You are one in a hundred thousand." Again he resumed his rapid walk in silent thoughtfulness; when suddenly he wheeled round, and said, —

"O Moody! I don't want you to think that I have become a religious man because I asked you to pray. I am sorry to say it; but I am not, and never pretended to be, religious. No one knows this better than you. But, Moody, there is one thing about it: I *do* believe in Almighty God; and I believe, also, in the Bible; and I say, D—n me if Nashville shall be surrendered!"

Mr. Lincoln narrated this anecdote to Mr. Carpenter, who, admirably commenting upon it, says, "The incident was given with a thrilling effect, which mentally placed Johnson, for a time, alongside of Luther and Cromwell. Profanity or irreverence was lost sight of in the fervid utterance of a highly-wrought and great-souled determination, united with a rare exhibition of pathos and self-abnegation."

It was not until October, 1862, that Gov. Johnson's family succeeded in reaching him, having passed through scenes of great hardship and peril. In September, Mr. Lincoln recommended an election for members of Congress in several districts in Tennessee which had proved loyal. In December, Gov. Johnson issued a proclamation for elections in the ninth and tenth districts. He was, however, emphatically opposed to allowing any rebel sympathizers to vote on any of the acts necessary to the restoration of the State. It was not enough in his view that the representative chosen should be loyal, but he must represent a loyal constituency. He closed his proclamation in these decisive words:—

"No person will be considered an elector, qualified to vote, who, in addition to the other qualifications required by law, does not give satisfactory evidence, to the judges holding the election, of his loyalty to the Government of the United States."

About the same time, he imposed a tax of sixty thousand dollars upon the property of the secessionists for the support of the poor, the widows, and the orphans, who had been made such by the war. The current of events had apparently swept him along into entire sympathy with the Republican party. He was not only opposed to secession, but he was opposed to slavery, its

originating cause, and to that senseless and haughty aristocracy which was founded in the oppression of the poor and the helpless. Although in the presidential canvass he had voted for John C. Breckinridge, he now avowed himself the cordial supporter of the measures of President Lincoln's administration.

In the autumn of 1863, he visited Washington to confer with the President in reference to the restoration of Tennessee to the Union. Our military operations had been so successful, that all organized bodies of rebels had been driven from the State. The people who had been so long under the tyrannic rule of bands of thieves and murderers were rejoiced at their deliverance. Numerous conventions were held, where Gov. Johnson addressed the people with that directness, and cogency of utterance, which he had so eminently at his command.

"Tennessee," said he, "is not out of the Union, never has been, and never will be. The bonds of the Constitution and the Federal powers will always prevent that. This Government is perpetual. Provision is made for reforming the Government and amending the Constitution, and admitting States into the Union, not for letting them out.

"Where are we now? There is a rebellion. The rebel army is driven back. Here lies your State,—a sick man in his bed, emaciated and exhausted, paralyzed in all his powers, and unable to walk alone. The physician comes. The United States send an agent or a military governor, whichever you please to call him, to aid you in restoring your government. Whenever you desire in good faith to restore civil authority, you can do so; and a proclamation for an election will be issued as speedily as it is practicable to hold one. One by one, all the agencies of your State government will be set in motion. A legislature will be elected. Judges will be appointed temporarily, until you can elect them at the polls. And so of sheriffs, county-court judges, justices, and other officers, until the way is fairly open for the people, and all the parts of civil government resume their ordinary functions. This is no nice, intricate, metaphysical question; it is a plain, common-sense matter; and there is nothing in the way but obstinacy."

Gov. Johnson had now so thoroughly identified himself with the great Republican party, and had so warmly advocated its fundamental principles, that his name began to be spoken of as a



candidate for the vice-presidency at the approaching election. Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, now filled that office. He was a gentleman of high intellectual and moral worth, and discharged his duties to the full satisfaction of those who elected him. But, for obvious reasons, it was deemed very important, since President Lincoln was from the West, to elect a Vice-President from some one of the Southern States. There was no other name so prominent as that of Andrew Johnson. The North had learned to admire the man. His boldness, his popular eloquence, his avowed hostility to slavery, his all-embracing patriotism, and the sufferings he had endured in consequence of his devotion to his country's flag, all endeared him to the North; and, with enthusiasm, the Republican party rallied round him.

At the National Convention assembled in Baltimore on the 6th of June, 1864, almost by acclamation he was nominated on the same ticket with Abraham Lincoln, who was renominated for the presidency. Most cordially this nomination was responded to by the people. When this intelligence reached Nashville, an immense mass-meeting was assembled to give it their ratification. Gov. Johnson was invited to address them. In the speech which he made on this occasion, he said, —

“While society is in this disordered state, and we are seeking security, let us fix the foundations of the Government on principles of eternal justice, which will endure for all time. There are those in our midst who are for perpetuating the institution of slavery. Let me say to you, Tennesseans, and men from the Northern States, that slavery is dead. It was not murdered by me. I told you long ago what the result would be if you endeavored to go out of the Union to save slavery, — that the result would be bloodshed, rapine, devastated fields, plundered villages and cities; and therefore I urged you to remain in the Union. In trying to save slavery, you killed it, and lost your own freedom. Your slavery is dead; but I did not murder it. As Macbeth said to Banquo's bloody ghost, —

‘Thou canst not say I did it :  
Never shake thy gory locks at me.’

Slavery is dead, and you must pardon me if I do not mourn over its dead body. You can bury it out of sight. In restoring the State, leave out that disturbing and dangerous element, and

use only those parts of the machinery which will move in harmony.

"Now, in regard to emancipation, I want to say to the blacks, that liberty means liberty to work, and enjoy the fruits of your labor. Idleness is not freedom. I desire that all men shall have a fair start and an equal chance in the race of life; and let him succeed who has the most merit. This, I think, is a principle of Heaven. I am for emancipation, for two reasons: first, because it is right in itself; and, second, because, in the emancipation of the slaves, we break down an odious and dangerous aristocracy. I think that we are freeing more whites than blacks in Tennessee. I want to see slavery broken up; and, when its barriers are thrown down, I want to see industrious, thrifty emigrants pouring in from all parts of the country."

The utterance of such sentiments endeared Gov. Johnson very much to all liberty-loving hearts. In a similar strain he wrote, in his letter to the convention accepting the nomination, —

"Before the Southern people assumed a belligerent attitude, and repeatedly since, I took occasion most frankly to declare the views I then entertained in relation to the wicked purposes of the Southern politicians. They have since undergone but little if any change. Time and subsequent events have rather confirmed than diminished my confidence in their correctness.

"At the beginning of this great struggle, I entertained the same opinion of it that I do now. In my place in the Senate, I denounced it as treason, worthy the punishment of death, and warned the Government and the people of the impending danger. But my voice was not heard, or my counsel heeded, until it was too late to avert the storm. It still continued to gather over us, without molestation from the authorities at Washington, until at length it broke with all its fury upon the country; and now, if we would save the Government from being overwhelmed by it, we must meet it in the true spirit of patriotism, and bring traitors to the punishment due their crimes, and by force of arms crush out and subdue the last vestige of rebel authority in the State.

"I felt then, as now, that the destruction of the Government was deliberately determined upon by wicked and designing conspirators, whose lives and fortunes were pledged to carry it out;

and that no compromise short of an unconditional recognition of the independence of the Southern States could have been, or could now be, proposed, which they would accept. The clamor for 'Southern rights,' as the rebel journals were pleased to designate their rallying-cry, was, not to secure their assumed rights *in the Union and under the Constitution*, but to disrupt the Government, and establish an independent organization, based upon slavery, which they could at all times control.

"The separation of the Government has for years past been the cherished purpose of the Southern leaders. Baffled in 1832 by the stern, patriotic heroism of Andrew Jackson, they sullenly acquiesced, only to mature their diabolical schemes, and await the recurrence of a more favorable opportunity to execute them. Then the pretext was the tariff; and Jackson, after foiling their schemes of nullification and disunion, with prophetic perspicacity warned the country against the renewal of their efforts to dismember the Government.

"In a letter dated May 1, 1833, to the Rev. A. J. Crawford, after demonstrating the heartless insincerity of the Southern nullifiers, he said, 'Therefore the tariff was only a pretext, and disunion and Southern Confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro or slavery question.' Time has fully verified this prediction; and we have now not only 'the negro or slavery question' as the pretext, but the *real cause* of the Rebellion; and both must go down together. It is vain to attempt to reconstruct the Union with the distracting element of slavery in it. Experience has demonstrated its incompatibility with free and republican governments, and it would be unwise and unjust longer to continue it as one of the institutions of our country. While it remained subordinate to the Constitution and laws of the United States, I yielded to it my support; but when it became rebellious, and attempted to rise above the Government and control its action, I threw my humble influence against it.

"The authority of the Government is supreme, and will admit of no rivalry. No institution can rise above it, whether it be slavery or any other organized power. In our happy form of government, all must be subordinate to the will of the people, when reflected through the Constitution, and laws made pursuant thereto, State or Federal. This great principle lies at the foun-

dation of every government, and cannot be disregarded without the destruction of the Government itself.

"In accepting the nomination, I might here close ; but I cannot forego the opportunity of saying to my old friends of the Democratic party *proper*, with whom I have so long and pleasantly been associated, that the hour has now come when that great party can vindicate its devotion to true Democratic policy, and measures of expediency. The war is a war of great principles. It involves the supremacy and life of the Government itself. If the Rebellion triumph, free government, North and South, fails. If, on the other hand, the Government is successful, — as I do not doubt that it will be, — its destiny is fixed, its basis is permanent and enduring, and its career of honor and glory is but just begun. In a great contest like this for the existence of free government, the path of duty is patriotism and principle.

"This is not the hour for strife and division among ourselves. Such differences of opinion only encourage the enemy, prolong the war, and waste the country. Unity of action, and concentration of power, should be our watchword and rallying-cry. This accomplished, the time will rapidly approach when the armies in the field — that great power of the Rebellion — will be broken and crushed by our gallant officers and brave soldiers ; and, ere long they will return to their homes and firesides, to resume the avocations of peace, with the proud consciousness that they have aided in the noble work of re-establishing upon a surer and more permanent basis the great temple of American freedom."

These are surely noble truths, nobly uttered. They met with a cordial response in every loyal heart. Every sentence elevated Andrew Johnson in the estimation of the American people. The names of Lincoln and Johnson were not only placed upon the same ticket, but at the fireside, and from the church, prayers of gratitude ascended to God that he had raised up a Southern man to co-operate with our own noble son of the West in the protection and redemption of our country.

These feelings were increased to enthusiasm by an event which took place a few months after the date of this letter.

On the 24th of October, 1864, Gov. Johnson addressed an immense assemblage of the colored people of Nashville in a speech of extraordinary eloquence and power. We give it here, somewhat abbreviated from the admirable report furnished by a cor-



respondent of "The Cincinnati Gazette." Gov. Johnson spoke from the steps leading from Cedar Street to the State-house yard. The whole street was packed with the densest mass of human beings; the great proportion of them, men, women and children, being the dusky-hued sons and daughters of bondage. The State-house yard, and also the great stone wall which separated it from the street, were covered with the multitude. It was in the evening, and many torches threw a weird-like light over the scene. The excitement was so intense, that there was almost breathless silence. In tones which the sublimity of the occasion rendered deep and tremulous, the governor began: —

"Colored men of Nashville, you have all heard the President's proclamation, by which he announced to the world that the slaves in a large portion of the seceded States were thenceforth and forever free. For certain reasons which seemed wise to the President, the benefits of that proclamation did not extend to you or to your native State. Many of you were consequently left in bondage. The taskmaster's scourge was not yet broken, and the fetters still galled your limbs. Gradually the iniquity has been passing away; but the hour has come when the last vestiges of it must be removed.

"Consequently, I too, standing here upon the steps of the Capitol, with the past history of the State to witness, the present condition to guide, and its future to encourage me, — I, Andrew Johnson, do hereby proclaim freedom, full, broad, and unconditional, to every man in Tennessee."

It was one of those moments when the speaker seems inspired, and when his audience, catching the inspiration, rises to his level, and becomes one with him. Strangely as some of the words of this immortal utterance sounded to those uncultivated ears, not one of them was misunderstood. With breathless attention, these sons of bondage hung upon each syllable. Each individual seemed carved in stone until the last word of the grand climax was reached, and then the scene which followed beggars all description. One simultaneous roar of approval and delight burst from three thousand throats. Flags, banners, torches, and transparencies were waved wildly over the throng, or flung aloft in the ecstasy of joy. Drums, fifes, and trumpets added to the uproar; and the mighty tumult of this great mass of human beings, rejoicing for their race, woke up the slumbering echoes of the

Capitol, vibrated through the length and breadth of the city, rolled over the sluggish waters of the Cumberland, and rang out far into the night beyond.

There were in the vicinity of Nashville two slaveholders of immense wealth. Their princely estates spread over thousands of acres, and were tilled by hundreds of unpaid bondmen. The old feudal barons did not wield more despotic power than Cockrill and Harding wielded over their cabined slaves. Both of these men were, of course, intense rebels. Their names were everywhere prominent, and their great wealth gave them vast influence in the State. In allusion to them, Gov. Johnson continued:—

“I am no agrarian. I wish to see secured to every man, rich or poor, the fruits of his honest industry, effort, or toil. I want each man to feel that what he has gained by his own skill or talent or exertion is rightfully his, and his alone: but if, through an iniquitous system, a vast amount of wealth has been accumulated in the hands of one man, or a few men, then that result is wrong: and the sooner we can right it, the better for all concerned. It is wrong that Mack Cockrill and W. D. Harding, by means of forced and unpaid labor, should have monopolized so large a share of the lands and wealth of Tennessee; and I say, that if their immense plantations were divided up, and parcelled out amongst a number of free, industrious, and honest farmers, it would give more good citizens to the Commonwealth, increase the wages of our mechanics, enrich the markets of our city, enliven all the arteries of trade, improve society, and conduce to the greatness and glory of the State.

“The representatives of this corrupt, and, if you will permit me almost to swear a little, this damnable aristocracy, taunt us with our desire to see justice done, and charge us with favoring negro equality. Of all living men, they should be the last to mouth that phrase; and, even when uttered in their hearing, it should cause their cheeks to tinge, and burn with shame. Negro equality indeed! Why, pass any day along the sidewalk of High Street, where these aristocrats more particularly dwell,—these aristocrats, whose sons are now in the bands of guerillas and cut-throats who prowl and rob and murder around our city,—pass by their dwellings, I say, and you will see as many mulatto as negro children, the former bearing an unmistakable resemblance to their aristocratic owners.

"Colored men of Tennessee, this, too, shall cease. Your wives and daughters shall no longer be dragged into a concubinage, compared to which polygamy is a virtue, to satisfy the brutal lusts of slaveholders and overseers. Henceforth the sanctity of God's law of marriage shall be respected in your persons, and the great State of Tennessee shall no more give her sanction to your degradation and your shame."

"Thank God, thank God!" came from the lips of a thousand women, who, in their own persons, had experienced the iniquity of the man-seller's code. "Thank God!" fervently echoed the fathers, husbands, and brothers of these women.

"And if the law protects you," he continued, "in the possession of your wives and children, if the law shields those whom you hold dear from the unlawful grasp of lust, will you endeavor to be true to yourselves, and shun, as it were death itself, the path of lewdness, crime, and vice?"

"We will, we will!" cried the assembled thousands; and, joining in a sublime and tearful enthusiasm, another mighty shout went up to heaven.

"Looking at this vast crowd," the governor continued, "and reflecting through what a storm of persecution and obloquy they are compelled to pass, I am almost induced to wish, that, as in the days of old, a Moses might arise, who should lead them safely to their promised land of freedom and happiness."

"You are our Moses!" shouted several voices; and the exclamation was caught up and cheered until the Capitol rang again.

"God," continued the governor, "no doubt has prepared somewhere an instrument for the great work he designs to perform in behalf of this outraged people; and, in due time, your leader will come forth, your Moses will be revealed to you."

"We want no Moses but you!" again shouted the crowd.

"Well, then," Gov. Johnson replied, "humble and unworthy as I am, if no other better shall be found, I will indeed be your Moses, and lead you through the Red Sea of war and bondage to a fairer future of liberty and peace. I speak now as one who feels the world his country, and all who love equal rights his friends. I speak, too, as a citizen of Tennessee. I am here on my own soil; and here I mean to stay, and fight this great battle of truth and justice to a triumphant end. Rebellion and slavery shall, by God's good help, no longer pollute our State. Loyal

men, whether white or black, shall alone control her destinies; and, when this strife in which we are all engaged is past, I trust; I know, we shall have a better state of things, and shall all rejoice that honest labor reaps the fruit of its own industry, and that every man has a fair chance in the race of life."

It is impossible to describe the enthusiasm which followed these words. Joy beamed in every countenance. Tears and laughter followed each other in swift succession. The great throng moved and swayed back and forth in the intensity of emotion, and shout after shout rent the air. This was one of those scenes of moral sublimity which few on earth have ever been permitted to witness. The speaker seemed inspired with very unusual power to meet the grandeur of the occasion and the theme. As he descended from the steps of the Capitol in this proudest, holiest hour of his life, the dense throng parted, as by magic, to let him through; and, all that night long, his name was mingled with the curses and the execrations of the traitor and oppressor, and with the blessings of the oppressed and the poor. Gen. Sherman was then sweeping through the very heart of the rebellious States, and Grant was thundering at the gates of Petersburg and Richmond. Tennessee had returned to her allegiance, revised her Constitution, and abolished slavery.

Mr. Johnson has always been a little boastful of his lowly origin. Certainly it is to his credit, that, from a position so extremely obscure, he should have raised himself to stations of so much eminence. In a speech delivered at Nashville soon after his nomination, he said, —

"In accepting the nomination, I shall stand on the principles I here enunciate, let the consequences for good or for evil be what they may. A distinguished Georgian told me in Washington, after the election of Mr. Lincoln, and just before his inauguration, that the people of Georgia would not consent to be governed by a man who had risen from the ranks. It was one of the principal objections of the people of the South to Mr. Lincoln. What will they do now, when they have to take two rulers who have risen from the ranks? This aristocracy is antagonistic to the principles of free democratic government, and the time has come when it must give up the ghost. The time has come when this rebellious element of aristocracy must be punished.

"The day when they could talk of their three or four thousand



acres of land, tilled by their hundreds of negroes, is past; and the hour for the division of these rich lands among the energetic and laboring masses is at hand. The field is to be thrown open; and I now invite the energetic and industrious of the North to come and occupy it, and apply here the same skill and industry which has made the North so rich. I am for putting down the aristocracy, and dividing out their possessions among the worthier laborers of any and all colors."

The election which took place on the 14th of November, 1864, resulted in the choice of Lincoln and Johnson by one of the largest majorities ever given. On the 4th of March, 1865, Mr. Johnson was inaugurated Vice-President of the United States. The clouds of gloom which had so long overhung the land were beginning to break. Grant and Sherman were dealing the armies of Rebellion annihilating blows. On the 3d of April, there was a meeting in Washington to rejoice over the glad tidings of the evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond. In the address which Vice-President Johnson made at that meeting, he said, —

"At the time that the traitors in the Senate of the United States plotted against the Government, and entered into a conspiracy more foul, more execrable, and more odious, than that of Catiline against the Romans, I happened to be a member of that body, and, as to loyalty, stood solitary and alone among the senators from the Southern States. I was then and there called upon to know what I would do with such traitors; and I want to repeat my reply here.

"I said, if we had an Andrew Jackson, he would hang them as high as Haman. But as he is no more, and sleeps in his grave, in his own beloved State, where traitors and treason have even insulted his tomb and the very earth that covers his remains, humble as I am, when you ask me what I would do, my reply is, I would arrest them; I would try them; I would convict them; and I would hang them.

"Since the world began, there has never been a rebellion of such gigantic proportions, so infamous in character, so diabolical in motive, so entirely disregarding of the laws of civilized war. It has introduced the most savage mode of warfare ever practised upon earth.

"One word more, and I am done. It is this: I am in favor of leniency; but, in my opinion, evil-doers should be punished. Treas-

son is the highest crime known in the catalogue of crimes; and for him that is guilty of it, for him that is willing to lift his impious hand against the authority of the nation, I would say death is too easy a punishment. My notion is, that treason must be made odious, and traitors must be punished and impoverished, their social power broken: they must be made to feel the penalty of their crime. You, my friends, have traitors in your very midst, and treason needs rebuke and punishment here as well as elsewhere. It is not the men in the field who are the greatest traitors: it is the men who have encouraged them to imperil their lives, while they themselves have remained at home, expending their means and exerting all their power to overthrow the Government. Hence I say this, 'The halter to intelligent, influential traitors!'

"To the honest boy, to the deluded man, who has been deceived into the rebel ranks, I would extend leniency; but the leaders I would hang. I hold, too, that wealthy traitors should be made to remunerate those men who have suffered as a consequence of their crime."

The great rebel army under Gen. Lee surrendered on the 9th of April, 1865. Five days after this, on the 14th, while the bells of joy were ringing all over the nation at the utter overthrow of the Rebellion, the bullet of the assassin pierced the brain of President Lincoln. On the morning of the 15th, the fearful tidings quivered along the wires, creating almost universal consternation and grief, *Abraham Lincoln died this morning at twenty-two minutes after seven o'clock!*

Immediately upon his death, Hon. James Speed, Attorney-General of the United States, waited upon Vice-President Johnson with the following official communication:—

WASHINGTON CITY, April 15, 1865.

ANDREW JOHNSON, *Vice-President of the United States.*

*Sir,*—Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, was shot by an assassin last evening, at Ford's Theatre, in this city, and died at the hour of twenty-two minutes after seven o'clock this morning. About the same time at which the President was shot, an assassin entered the sick-chamber of Hon. W. H. Seward, Secretary of State, and stabbed him in several places in the throat, neck, and face, severely, if not mortally, wounding him. Other

members of the Secretary's family were dangerously wounded by the assassin while making his escape.

By the death of President Lincoln, the office of President has devolved, under the Constitution, upon you. The emergency of the Government demands that you should immediately qualify yourself according to the requirements of the Constitution, and enter upon the duties of President of the United States. If you will please make known your pleasure, such arrangements as you deem proper will be made.

Your obedient servants,

HUGH McCULLOCH, *Secretary of the Treasury.*

EDWIN M. STANTON, *Secretary of War.*

GIDEON WELLES, *Secretary of the Navy.*

WILLIAM DENNISON, *Postmaster-General.*

J. P. USHER, *Secretary of the Interior.*

JAMES SPEED, *Attorney-General.*

At ten o'clock, but little more than two and a half hours after the death of the President, a small but august assemblage met at the private apartments of Mr. Johnson, and Chief Justice Chase administered to him the oath of office. The ceremonies were brief, but invested with unusual solemnity, in consequence of the sad event which rendered them necessary.

When Mr. Johnson was inaugurated Vice-President, an untoward event occurred, which excited great pain and anxiety throughout the nation. It was an event which attracted such universal attention and such severity of comment at the time, that historic fidelity requires that it should be alluded to. Mr. Johnson had been very sick with typhoid-fever, and was in a state of extreme debility. He could not walk his chamber-floor without tottering. His physician judged it imprudent for him to attempt to make his appearance at the inauguration; but his anxiety was so great to attend ceremonies in which he was to assume such momentous responsibilities, that, by the reluctant consent of the physician, he went, taking a stimulant to strengthen him for the hour. The stimulant was not a strong one; but, in his weak and fevered state, it so overcame him, that in the Senate Chamber, before the assembled dignitaries of our own and other lands, in his inaugural address, he uttered incoherent thoughts which mantled the cheek of the nation with a blush.

A generous people promptly, gladly, accepted the explanation.

The affair, for a moment so humiliating to national pride, was forgiven and forgotten. With confiding trust, Andrew Johnson was received as the worthy successor of Abraham Lincoln, the loved and the lamented. Seldom, if ever, has a President entered upon his office so deeply enshrined in the affections and confidence of the Christian people all over our land as did President Johnson. Two days after he had assumed the duties of his responsible position, a delegation of citizens from Illinois, who were about to accompany the remains of President Lincoln to the burial-ground in Springfield, called upon President Johnson to pay him their respects. Gov. Oglesby, in behalf of the delegation, said,—

“I take much pleasure in presenting to you this delegation of the citizens of Illinois, representing almost every portion of the State. We are drawn together by the mournful events of the past few days to give some feeble expression, by appropriate and respectful ceremonies, to the feelings we, in common with the whole nation, realize as pressing us to the earth. We thought it not inappropriate, before we should separate, even in this sad hour, to seek this interview with your Excellency, that while the bleeding heart is pouring out its mournful anguish over the death of our beloved late President, the idol of our State and the pride of our whole country, we may earnestly express to you, the living head of this nation, our deliberate, full, and abiding confidence in you, as the one who, in these dark hours, must bear upon yourself the mighty responsibility of maintaining, defending, and directing its affairs.

“The record of your whole past life, familiar to all, the splendor of your recent gigantic efforts to stay the hand of treason and assassination, and restore the flag to the uttermost bounds of the Republic, assure that noble State which we represent, and, we believe, the people of the United States, that we may safely trust our destinies in your hands. And to this end we come in the name of the State of Illinois, and, we confidently believe, fully and faithfully expressing the wishes of our people, to present and pledge to you the cordial, earnest, and unremitting purpose of our State to give your administration the strong support we have heretofore given to the administration of our lamented late President, the policy of whom we have heretofore, do now, and shall continue to indorse.”

President Johnson, in his reply, said, “I have listened with pro-



found emotion to the kind words you have addressed to me. The visit of this large delegation to speak to me, through you, sir, these words of encouragement, I had not anticipated. In the midst of the saddening circumstances which surround us, and the immense responsibility thrown upon me, an expression of the confidence of individuals, and still more of an influential body like that before me, representing a great commonwealth, cheers and strengthens my heavily-burdened mind. I am at a loss for words to respond. In an hour like this of deepest sorrow, were it possible to embody in words the feelings of my bosom, I could not command my lips to utter them. Perhaps the best reply I could make, and the one most readily appropriate to your kind assurance of confidence, would be to receive them in silence.

“The throbbings of my heart, since the sad catastrophe which has appalled us, cannot be reduced to words; and oppressed as I am with the new and great responsibility which has devolved upon me, and saddened with grief, I can with difficulty respond to you at all. But I cannot permit such expressions of the confidence reposed in me by the people to pass without acknowledgment. Sprung from the people myself, every pulsation in the popular heart finds an immediate answer in my own. Your words of countenance and encouragement sank deep into my heart; and, were I even a coward, I could not but gather from them strength to carry out my convictions of right. Thus feeling, I shall enter upon the discharge of my great duty firmly, steadfastly, if not with the signal ability exhibited by my predecessor, which is still fresh in our sorrowing minds.

“In what I say on this occasion, I shall indulge in no petty spirit of anger, no feeling of revenge. But we have beheld a notable event in the history of mankind. In the midst of the American people, where every citizen is taught to obey law and observe the rules of Christian conduct, our Chief Magistrate, the beloved of all hearts, has been assassinated; and when we trace this crime to its cause, when we remember the source whence the assassin drew his inspiration, and then look at the result, we stand yet more astounded at this most barbarous, most diabolical assassination. Such a crime as the murder of a great and good man, honored and revered, the beloved and the hope of the people, springs not alone from a solitary individual of ever so desperate wickedness. We can trace its cause through successive steps,

without my enumerating them here, back to that source which is the spring of all our woes.

"No one can say, that, if the perpetrator of this fiendish deed be arrested, he should not undergo the extremest penalty the law knows for crime. None will say that mercy should interpose. But is he alone guilty? Here, gentlemen, you perhaps expect me to present some indication of my future policy? One thing I will say, Every era teaches its lesson. The times we live in are not without instruction. The American people must be taught, if they do not already feel, that treason is a crime, and must be punished; that the Government will not always bear with its enemies; that it is strong, not only to protect, but to punish.

"When we turn to the criminal code, and examine the catalogue of crimes, we find there arson laid down as a crime, with its appropriate penalty; we find there theft and robbery and murder given as crime; and there, too, we find the last and highest of crimes, *treason*. With other and inferior offences our people are familiar; but, in our peaceful history, *treason* has been almost unknown. The people must understand that it is the blackest of crimes, and that it will be severely punished. I make this allusion, not to excite the already exasperated feelings of the public, but to point out the principles of public justice which should guide our action at this particular juncture, and which accord with sound public morals. Let it be engraven on every heart that treason is a crime, and that traitors shall suffer its penalty.

"While we are appalled, overwhelmed, at the fall of one man in our midst by the hand of a traitor, shall we allow men, I care not by what weapons, to attempt the life of a State with impunity? While we strain our minds to comprehend the enormity of this assassination, shall we allow the nation to be assassinated? I speak in no spirit of unkindness. I do not harbor bitter or revengeful feelings towards any. I know that men love to have their actions spoken of in connection with acts of mercy; and how easy it is to yield to this impulse! But we must not forget that what may be mercy to the individual is cruelty to the State. In the exercise of mercy, there should be no doubt left that this high prerogative is not used to relieve a few at the expense of the many. Be assured that I shall never forget that I am not to con-

sult my own feelings alone, but to give an account to the whole people.

“In regard to my future course, I will now make no professions, no pledges. I have long labored for the amelioration and elevation of the great mass of mankind. I believe that government was made for man, not man for government. This struggle of the people against the most gigantic rebellion the world ever saw has demonstrated that the attachment of the people to their Government is the strongest national defence human wisdom can devise. My past life, especially my course during the present unholy Rebellion, is before you. I have no principles to retract. I have no professions to offer. I shall not attempt to anticipate the future. As events occur, and it becomes necessary for me to act, I shall dispose of each as it arises.”

A nation might well be proud of a ruler with so noble a record, cherishing such sentiments, and capable of expressing them with so much force and eloquence. In conformity with these principles, the very large majority of Congress, both the Senate and the House, began to adopt those measures of reconstruction through which the States which had been in rebellion could be restored to co-operation in the government of the Union. The rebels themselves declared, in the loudest and most defiant tones, that they were conquered only, not subdued; that, in heart, they were as relentless and determined as ever; and that, having failed upon the bloody field, they would renew the conflict, as of old, upon the floor of Congress. But the patriotic country felt safe in the assurance that we had a President in perfect harmony with the noblest Congress which had ever convened. But, to the surprise and almost the consternation of both Congress and the great mass of the people, it was found that the President, through some inexplicable influence, seemed to have changed his views, and was opposing vehemently, and with mortifying indecorum, those measures which Congress, with the general approval of the loyal population, would adopt, to protect the friends of the Government from the vengeance of unrepentant rebels, and to shield our free institutions from renewed assaults.

The change was one of the most sudden and marvellous on record. Almost in an hour, the rebels and their sympathizers, who had been burning President Johnson in effigy, and denouncing him in the strongest language of vituperation which contempt

and rage could coin, were shouting his praises, and rushing in from all quarters to greet him with their hosannas. The friends who elected him, who loved him, who leaned upon him for their support, were struck aghast. For a time, they were mute in grief. Then came remonstrance and the angry strife. The bitterness of the old days of slavery domination, which we hoped had passed away forever, was revived. It seemed as though all our blood had been shed and our treasure expended in vain. The President urgently advocated measures of reconstruction, which, in the judgment of Congress, and of the vast majority of the people of the North, would place the Government again in the hands of those rebels and their sympathizers who had deluged our land in blood, and swept it with the flames of war, that they might overthrow our free institutions, and establish human bondage forever as the corner-stone of this republic.

The great question upon which this strife arose was, "Shall the United-States Government extend its protection to all loyal men, without distinction of race, who, during the Rebellion, proved true to the national flag?" President Johnson is understood to assume that we have no such right; that we must leave the nation's defenders, black and white, in the Southern States, to the tender mercies of the rebels; that the rebel States have never been out of the Union, have never forfeited their political rights; and that if they now meet, and elect delegates to Congress, we are bound to receive those delegates upon their oath of loyalty; each house of Congress, of course, having the right to reject or expel any member who is personally obnoxious.

This principle of reconstruction is revolting to the conscience of the great majority of Congress and of the loyal North. Mr. Peter Cooper, whose virtues have given him a national fame, in an admirable letter of respectful yet earnest remonstrance to President Johnson, says,—

"I, with thousands of others who labored to aid the Government in putting down the Rebellion, would have rejoiced if Congress could have found all the reports of the continued persecution of Union men throughout the South to be groundless and false.

"The whole Republican party would have rejoiced if Congress could have found it safe to admit the members offered from Southern States at once to a full share in the Government.



"This being my wish does not authorize me to denounce the majority in Congress, and accuse them of being radicals and traitors, 'hanging on the skirts of a Government which they are trying to destroy.'

"It was said of old, the sin of ingratitude is worse than the sin of witchcraft.

"To my mind, our nation must live in everlasting infamy if we fail to secure a full measure of justice to an unfortunate race of men who were originally hunted down in their own country, and carried off and sold, like beasts, into an abject slavery, with all their posterity.

"This enslaved race has the strongest possible claims for kindness, as well as justice, at the hands of the people and government of the whole country, and more especially from the people of the South. These unfortunate slaves have done a great portion of the labor that has fed and clothed the whites and blacks of the Southern country.

"As true as the laborer is worthy of his hire, so true is it that we, as a nation, cannot withhold justice and equal rights from a race of men that has fought and bled and labored to defend and protect the Union of the States in the hour of our nation's greatest extremity.

"The enemies of our country and government are now trying to persuade the community to believe that a war of races would result from giving the black man the same measure of justice and rights which the white men claim for themselves. This will be found to be a groundless fear. Our national danger will always result from unequal and partial laws. We cannot make laws which will oppress and keep in ignorance the poor, without bringing on ourselves and our country the just judgment of a righteous God, who will reward us as a nation according to our works.

"I indulge the hope that you will see, before it is entirely too late, the terrible danger of taking council with Northern men in sympathy with the rebels who fought the Government with all the energy of desperation to accomplish the destruction of our Government, instead of taking counsel with those friends who elected you, — friends who have been and are as desirous as you can possibly be to secure the adoption of every measure calculated to promote the substantial welfare of all parts of our common country."

As to the question whether the National Government has the constitutional right to extend its protection to its defenders in the several States, much depends upon the theory which one adopts in reference to the war of the Rebellion. A contest of arms between an established and recognized government, and a military force formed by a combination of *individual citizens* is *civil war*. The insurgents, when subdued or captured, are responsible *individually* for their acts, and are consequently amenable to the courts of law on charges of treason and rebellion.

A contest of arms between any government and a military force organized *under the authority of any other government*, exercising an independent sovereignty, is *international war*. The persons engaged in the military operations are not individually responsible for their acts before courts of justice on criminal charges, but, when subdued or captured, can only be treated as prisoners of war. The victorious government is, however, entitled to exercise over the one that is subdued the rights of a conqueror as defined by the laws of war.

The Constitution of the United States is of a twofold character. It establishes a government with sovereign powers in respect to certain specified interests, and, to this extent, is simply a constitution of government framed by a single people. It also at the same time includes a *covenant of union* made by a number of separate governments, each exercising its own independent sovereignty in respect to certain other interests; and to this extent the act is of the nature of a *league* or *treaty*, binding several sovereignties to the fulfilment of certain obligations towards each other.

In case of hostilities arising among the parties of this instrument, the question whether, in a legal point of view, the conflict is to be regarded as a *civil war* or an *international war*, in respect to its character and effects, will depend upon the nature of it in relation to these two different aspects of the instruments; that is, whether the insurgents act in an individual or in a corporate capacity.

If it is a contest between the General Government and a force organized by individual citizens, it is an insurrection, or civil war. The insurgents may be so numerous and so well organized as to force the Government, during the contest, to grant them belligerent rights; but, when vanquished or captured, they are amenable to the courts of law on charges of rebellion or treason.

If, on the other hand, it is admitted by the North to be, what the South claims it to be, a contest between the General Government and a force organized by and acting in subordination to any one or more of the State governments, under proceedings regularly taken by the State authorities, in the manner prescribed by law, then it is of the nature of *international war*, in so far as that the governments which inaugurate it assume the responsibility of it, and those acting under their authority are personally released. They can only be treated, when vanquished or captured, as prisoners of war. The victorious governments are entitled to exercise over the States that are vanquished the rights of conquerors, as regulated by the laws of war.

There can be no question that the latter was the view universally taken by those engaged in the Rebellion. They formed a government with its constitution and all its organized officers. They unfurled their flag, and conscripted their soldiers. They raised large armies, and issued letters of marque. They sent their ambassadors to knock at the doors of other governments for admission. In *point of fact*, they sundered all their relations with the National Government, and seditiously, illegally, unconstitutionally, but yet *really*, became an independent government, and maintained that independence during a struggle of four years' duration. They were so strong, that they compelled the National Government to recognize it as *war*, to exchange prisoners, and grant other belligerent rights.

At length, they were *conquered*. Their army was crushed; their piratic navy was annihilated. Their constitution and laws vanished. Their flag sank into the dust. Whatever may be their individual responsibility as rebels in organizing this hostile government, there can be no question whatever that they did, *in fact*, sunder their relations with the National Government; that they did, *in fact*, assume and exercise the functions of sovereignty; and that, having thus been vanquished, the victors are entitled to exercise over them the rights of conquerors, as regulated by the laws of war.

Within the territorial limits of this rebellious nation, there were thousands of patriotic white men who remained true to their country and its flag. In consequence, they were exposed to every conceivable outrage. Multitudes of them were scourged, shot, and hung. There were some millions of colored men who

were patriotic to their hearts' core. The object of the Rebellion was to strengthen the chains which had so long held them in bondage. The result of the Rebellion was to break those chains, and to let the oppressed go free. And now the unrepentant rebels are exceedingly exasperated against those Union white men, and those patriots of African descent whose sympathies were with the National Government; and these rebels implore the Northern people to be *magnanimous*, and to interpose no obstacle to their wreaking their vengeance upon the Union people of the South.

This is the great question of *reconstruction* which is now agitating the land. President Johnson is understood to advocate the restoration of the conquered States to the Union, without exacting from them any pledges whatever which will protect from violence the friends of the Union within their borders. He is understood to assume that the Rebellion was merely a series of illegal acts of private individuals; that the States in which the Rebellion took place, were, during the Rebellion, completely competent States of the United States as they were before the Rebellion, and were bound by all the obligations which the Constitution imposed, and entitled to all its privileges; and that now, whenever representatives appear from such States and demand admission, there is but one question which we have any right to ask; and that is, "Have these States organized governments which are republican in form?" It is said that each house of Congress can decide respecting the individual merits of the representative who claims admission to their body, and can receive or reject as it pleases; but, as to the governments which they represent, "how they were formed, under what auspices they were formed, are inquiries with which Congress has no concern. The right of the people to form a government for themselves has never been questioned."

It seems to be assumed, in the first place, that the States have never rebelled: *individuals* only have committed that crime. And then, in the second place, it is assumed that these *individuals* have forfeited nothing by their treason; that they are entitled to all the rights and privileges which they ever enjoyed; and that they can send their representatives to Congress, and demand admission for them, with just as much assurance as if they had ever remained loyal. This *unconditional* admission of the rebel States, without securing in advance the imperilled rights of the loyalists, both



white and black, is regarded by the great mass of the Northern people as a crime which would justly expose the nation to the scorn of the world.

In September, 1866, there was a large convention in Philadelphia of *loyal men* from all the States which had been in rebellion. In their appeal to their fellow-citizens of the United States, they say, —

“The representatives of eight millions of American citizens appeal for protection and justice to their friends and brothers in the States that have been spared the cruelties of the Rebellion and the direct horrors of civil war. Here, on the spot where freedom was proffered and pledged by the fathers of the Republic, we implore your help against a re-organized oppression, whose sole object is to remit the control of our destinies to the contrivers of the Rebellion after they have been vanquished in honorable battle; thus at once to punish us for our devotion to our country, and intrench themselves in the official fortifications of the Government.”

In illustration of the manner in which the loyal colored population could be oppressed, and, while nominally free, could have burdens imposed upon them more intolerable than they ever bore before, the following statements are made: —

“The laws passed by some of our legislatures provide that all persons engaged in agricultural pursuits, as laborers, shall be required, during the first ten days of the month of January of each year, to make contracts for the ensuing year; and, in case of failure, such laborer shall be arrested by the civil authorities, and hired out; and, however much the laborer may be dissatisfied, he dare not leave, under the penalty of being apprehended, and forced to labor upon the public works, without compensation, until he will consent to return to his employer. It is punished with fine and imprisonment to entice or persuade away, feed, harbor, or secrete, any such laborer. In this way they are compelled to contract within a limit of ten days, punished by legal enslavement for violating a simple contract, and prevented from obtaining shelter, food, or employment. By severest penalties, he has been made a serf in the name of freedom, and suffers all the evils of the institution of slavery, without receiving that care which the master, from a sense of his own interest, would give to his bondsmen.”

Gov. Hamilton of Texas stated before an immense meeting

of the citizens of New Haven, Conn., on the evening of Sept. 15, 1866, that he could testify from his own personal knowledge, that in the single State of Texas, during the last six months, more than one thousand colored men had been brutally and wantonly murdered, — unoffending men, murdered simply because they were colored men and loyalists; and that not one of their murderers had been arrested. He stated that no Union white man dared to attempt to protect them; that, should he make the attempt, he would only expose himself to the same fate.

Again: the convention describes the treatment to which the white loyal men are exposed. The massacre in New Orleans was as follows: "On the 30th of July, 1866, in pursuance of a proclamation of Rufus N. Howell, one of the judges of the Supreme Court of Louisiana, the convention of loyal men, which, under the protection of the United-States troops, met, and framed the organic law under which the civil government of Louisiana was formed, and which adjourned subject to the call of the president, was again convened. The rebel press denounced the convention in the most abusive language, and resorted to every expedient to inflame the minds of the returned rebel soldiers against the convention and its adherents. Public meetings were held, and incendiary speeches made. The mayor of the city declared his intention to disperse the convention if it should attempt to meet within the limits of New Orleans.

"At twelve o'clock of the night before the meeting of the convention, the police were assembled at the station-houses, and each one was armed with a large navy revolver. The convention met at twelve o'clock, at noon, in the Convention Hall, at the corner of Dryades and Canal Streets. A large number of Union men were assembled — peaceful, unarmed citizens — in front of the building. At one o'clock, at a signal of the ringing of the bells, the police, joined by hundreds of armed rebel soldiers in citizens' dress, attacked, without the slightest provocation, the people in front of the building. With unrelenting butchery, these men of bloody hands and hearts shot down the loyalists. The street was soon cleared. There were left but pools of blood, and the mangled bodies of the slain.

They then made a dash into the hall of the convention. Paris, during the Reign of Terror, never witnessed a scene more dreadful. The members of the convention were unarmed, and utterly

defenceless. At the suggestion of their chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Horton, they quietly took their seats, and thus awaited the storm. Without any attempt at arrest, without encountering any act or word of provocation, these police-officers, with their Union-hating band of rebel soldiers, opened fire with their revolvers upon their helpless victims. Volley succeeded volley. No mercy was shown. White handkerchiefs were waved, as flags of truce, in vain. A deaf ear was turned to every plea. The work of butchery was continued, until every Union man in the room was either killed or wounded, excepting the very few who almost miraculously escaped.



RIOT AT NEW ORLEANS. — SCENE IN MECHANICS' HALL.

While this scene was being enacted in the hall, bands of murderers were equally active in the streets, for several squares around the building. Every colored man and every known Union man was shot down. The bodies of the slain were mutilated in the most brutal way. In the report which the Southern Union men make of this almost unparalleled outrage, they say, —

“ All the circumstances connected with this tragic event, — the



expressed intention of the mayor to disperse the convention, the withdrawal of the police from their beats in the city, the arming of them with revolvers, the signal given at one o'clock, and the prompt arrival of all the police of the city, including six or seven hundred special policemen sworn in for the occasion, the presence of the mayor during the tumult, the deception practised by the lieutenant-governor to keep troops out of the city,—all clearly prove that the bloody tragedy was, as Gen. Sheridan states, a 'premeditated massacre.'

"And from the brutal manner in which over four hundred Union men were killed or wounded, from the fact that not one single policeman or participant in the murderous affair has been arrested, from the fact that the same men whose hands are yet red with the blood of the patriot soldiers of the Republic, and crimsoned anew in that of the martyrs of the 30th of July, are still retained in office and power in that city, it is clear that there is no security for the lives, the liberty, or the property, of loyal citizens.

"It is a part of the history of this massacre, that indictments were found by the grand jury of the parish, composed of ex-rebel soldiers and their sympathizers, against the survivors of the convention, for having disturbed the peace of the community; and that, to-day, many of them are under heavy bonds to appear, and answer the charge. Nor did this seem to satisfy the judge of the criminal court: for the grand jury was brought before him on the following day, and instructed to find bills of indictment against the members of the convention and spectators, *charging them with murder*, giving the principle in law, and applying it in this case, that whosoever is engaged in an unlawful proceeding, from which death ensues to a human being, is guilty of murder; and alleging, that as the convention had no right to meet, and the police had killed many men on the day of its meeting, the survivors were therefore guilty of murder.

"But why continue," these Southern loyalists add, "the recital of this horrible record? We have before us evidences from every portion of the South, proving the extent and the increasing violence of the spirit of intolerance and persecution above set forth. This committee is in possession of information that Union men dare not attend this convention, for fear of violence upon their return. Gentlemen of this convention have, since their ar-



rival in this city, received notices warning them not to return home. We have omitted the relation of acts of ferocity and barbarism too horrible to relate. We submit to the impartial judgment of the American people, if these State governments, thus ruled by a disunion oligarchy, and based on the political disfranchisement of three millions of colored citizens, and the social disfranchisement of the entire loyal white citizens, are *republican in form*. Of doubtful legal existence, they are undoubtedly despotic, and despotic in the interests of treason, as we of the South know but too well.

"We affirm that the loyalists of the South look to Congress, with affectionate gratitude and confidence, as the only means to save us from persecution, exile, and death itself. And we also declare that there can be no security for us and our children, there can be no safety for the country, against the fell spirit of slavery, now organized in the form of serfdom, unless the Government, by national and appropriate legislation, enforced by national authority, shall confer on every citizen in the States we represent *the American birthright of impartial suffrage, and equality before the law*.

"This is the one all-sufficient remedy. This is our great need and pressing necessity. This is the only policy which will destroy sectionalism, by bringing into effective power a preponderating force on the side of loyalty. It will lead to an enduring pacification, because based on the eternal principles of justice. It is a policy which finally will regenerate the South itself, because it will introduce and establish there a divine principle of moral politics, which, under God's blessing, will, in elevating humanity, absorb and purify the unchristian hate and selfish passions of men."

According to the Constitution, if two-thirds of the members of each house of Congress agree upon any amendments, those amendments shall be submitted to the approval of the several States. If three-fourths of these accept them, they become a part of the Constitution. The views of a large majority in both houses of Congress were not in harmony with those of the President. Congress took the ground, that, before the rebellious States should be allowed to assume their former privileges in the councils of the nation, certain guaranties should be exacted of them as a protection for the Union men of the South, and to protect the nation from the repetition of so terrible a wrong.

With this view, they presented to the States *Terms of Reconstruction*, to be adopted as constitutional amendments. Whatever may be thought of the policy or the impolicy of these terms, their wonderful leniency no man can deny. The Rebellion was a terrible fact, as terrible as earth has ever known. It cost thousands of millions of money, and hundreds of thousands of lives, and an amount of misery, of life-long destitution and woe, which never can be gauged. A greater crime was never perpetrated. Its responsibility lies somewhere.

If we regard it as merely a combination of *individual citizens*, then these insurgents merit severe punishment on the charge of treason and rebellion. If we regard it as an *international war* between the United-States Government and independent Confederate States, then is the victorious Government entitled to the rights of a conqueror as defined by the laws of war. Prussia annihilates the governments of the provinces and the kingdoms she has conquered, and compels them to pay the expenses of the war; and not a cabinet in Europe utters a word of remonstrance.

With magnanimity never before in the history of the world manifested towards a vanquished enemy, the National Government calls for no punishment in the dungeon or on the scaffold, for no conscription or exile, for no political or personal servitude depriving States or individuals of any of their rights: it simply requires a few easy terms as a slight security against another war.

These terms are as follows:—

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled* (two thirds of both houses concurring), That the following article be proposed to the legislatures of the several States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States; which, when ratified by three-fourths of said legislatures, shall be valid as part of the Constitution; namely:—

ART. 1, SECT. 1. — All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and the States wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or happiness, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SECT. 2. — Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons, excluding Indians not taxed. But whenever the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President, representatives in Congress, executive and judicial officers, or members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SECT. 3. — That no person shall be a senator or representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of

any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each house, remove such disabilities.

SECT. 4. — The validity of the public debt of the United States authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims, shall be held illegal and void.

SECT. 5. — The Congress shall have power to enforce by appropriate legislation the provisions of this article.

This amendment allows each State to decide who of its citizens shall enjoy the right to vote; but it declares that those who are not allowed to vote shall not be counted in the basis of representation. If any State chooses to limit the elective franchise to a favored few, it can do so; but that privileged few are not to have their power augmented by representing large bodies of citizens who are permitted no voice in the selection of their representation. But for this provision, a rebel voter in South Carolina would represent a power in national affairs equal to any two loyal voters in New York. With slavery re-instituted under the guise of serfdom, and with their representation in Congress greatly increased, by counting in their basis of representation each serf as a man, the rebel States would have gained by the conflict in political power.

These terms of reconstruction appeared, to many, moderate and conciliatory in the extreme, and as the very least, which, in justice to its patriotic Southern defenders and the future safety of the country, the nation could accept. But those who were in sympathy with the Rebellion declared them to be "too degrading and humiliating to be entertained by a freeman for a single instant." President Johnson opposes them. Congress advocates them. The conflict agitates the nation. What the result will be, time only can tell. We must wait until the close of President Johnson's administration before it can be decided with what reputation his name shall descend to posterity.

Never was there so brilliant a career opening before any nation as is now opening before the United States of America, if we will but do justice; if we will but be true to our own principles of "equal rights for all men;" if we will but inscribe upon our banner "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Then shall the song rise from all our hills and vales, and be echoed back from the skies, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."



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